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THE LIFE

OF

JANE McCREA,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

Burgoyne's Expedition in 1777.

BY

DAVID WILSON.

NEW YORK:
BAKER, GODWIN & CO., PRINTERS,
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1853.

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TO

WILLIE LOW,

IN THE HOPE

THAT ITS PERUSAL,

WHEN HE SHALL HAVE PASSED THE AGE OF CHILDHOOD,

MAY REMIND HIM OF

THE AUTHOR,

This Little Volume is Affectionately Inscribed.

"Fort Edward on the Hudson,
It was guarded day and night;
But in the early morning
It saw a bitter sight!
A bitter sight, and fearful,
And a shameful deed of blood!
All the plain was cleared around,
But the slopes were thick with wood;
And a mighty Pine stood there,
On the summit of the hill,
And a bright spring rose beneath it,
With a low and liquid trill;
And a little way below,
All with vine-boughs overrun,
A white-walled cot was sleeping—
There, that shameful deed was done!"

Herbert.

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PREFACE.

THERE are but few persons of this generation who have looked into our annals, or listened to old men who participated in the trials of the Revolution, as they "fought their battles o'er again," but have become familiar with the name of Jane McCrea, and contemplated with melancholy interest her unhappy fate. Every writer who has recorded the events connected with the long and tedious struggle for Independence, has not failed to dwell mournfully upon the tragical occurrence; and indeed "the story of the unfortunate girl," it has been truthfully said "is so interwoven in our history that it has become a component part."

It has happened, however, that these writers contradict each other in many important particulars. For instance, one grave historian represents that Lieutenant Jones, on hearing of the massacre, "flew to the spot, tore away the leaves and earth, clasped the bleeding body in his arms, and, wrapping it in his cloak, bore it to a place of secrecy, until he could dispose of it according to his affections. He sat by it all night," he adds, "in a state of quiet delirium, now and then rousing himself to a furious determination to immolate the first Indian he could find; but," the account concludes, "they were in their lairs!"* Another, with equal gravity, re-

* Knapp's Additions to Hinton's History and Topography of the United States, Vol. 1, 258.

marks, that both parties of Indians who were present at the affair, on arriving in camp, were ordered by Burgoyne "to immediate execution."* These statements so candidly put forth, yet so unlike the facts, were probably drawn from the over-wrought versions and exaggerated ballads of the time.

On the other hand, some modern writers, as if to atone for the errors of their predecessors, have endeavored to divest the story of all that romantic interest which actually belongs to it. They have even gone so far as to assert that she was not murdered by the Indians at all, but on the contrary, was shot by a pursuing party of Americans. All contemporary evidence, however, stamps the assertion as preposterous. Burgoyne instituted an inquiry at Fort Ann, and after a severe examination into all the circumstances connected with the affair, condemned the murderer to death: "and he certainly should have suffered an *ignominious* death," was his language, "had I not been convinced that a pardon under the terms which I presented would be more efficacious than an execution, to prevent similar mischiefs."† He knew the facts, accurately and minutely. He was publicly charged with having "employed murderers," and "with having paid the price of blood." If she had been shot by the Americans, he would not, when attempting to escape the odium it had excited against him, and ingeniously laboring to excuse himself in the eyes of the world, have said that two chiefs "disputed which should be her guard, *and in a fit of savage passion in one, the unhappy woman became the victim.*"‡

It is supposed that there is no person now living who was in Fort Edward or its vicinity at the time of the massacre; at least

* Indian War, 114.

† Burgoyne's reply to Gates's Letter of the 20th August. ‡ Idem.

no one, at that period of sufficient age to comprehend what was taking place. They are all gone, and even their immediate descendants have long since passed the spring and summer into the autumn of life. Before the latter, who have listened to the particulars of the incident from the lips of the surviving actors in the tragedy, should be called to sleep with their fathers, it occurred to the author that a more detailed and authentic history of the event should be written than has yet publicly appeared. He has accordingly spared no pains in collecting all the information in his power. The sources from whence it is derived will sufficiently appear in the body of the work.

The murder of Miss McCrea was one of the incidents of Burgoyne's campaign. Her affianced husband accompanied him from his arrival at St. John's until his surrender at Saratoga. Her biography is so intermingled with the history of his expedition that it was found impossible to separate them.

In preparing the account of the expedition, numerous historical works, both native and foreign, have been consulted; but the "Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution," by Mr. B. F. Lossing, has afforded more assistance than any other. To the author of that most interesting and estimable book we are under especial obligations. The gleaner who went out over the fields of the Revolution, and carefully gathered up what the reapers had left behind, has entitled himself to the thanks of his generation and the gratitude of posterity. Circumstances beyond control have made it necessary to omit many facts of much interest in regard to the expedition, which otherwise would have been added. They will yet be supplied, however, should the reception of this volume seem to warrant a revised and enlarged edition.

THE

LIFE OF JANE McCREA.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory—Contradictory Statements—Birth and Parentage—Personal appearance and qualities—The Jones Family—Removal up the Hudson—Mrs. Campbell and her daughter—David Jones—The Betrothal—Unforeseen Events—Consequences of the war.

In the history of the Revolutionary War, perhaps no single incident is recorded which, at the time of its occurrence, created more intense sympathy, or aroused a spirit of more bitter indignation, than the massacre of Jane Mc Crea. The personal attractions, and amiable qualities for which the unfortunate maiden was distinguished, as well as the peculiar circumstances connected with the tragedy, continue to invest the story of her life with a romantic interest. The poet has made it the theme of his touching ballad; the artist has essayed to mould her supplicating form and features, as she knelt beneath the uplifted tomahawk of the savage;

while thousands have lingered long at the fountain, overshadowed by the venerable pine, near which the sanguinary scene was enacted.

Aside from the sympathy the story has universally excited, and the air of sorrowful romance that surrounds it, its interest is enhanced by the fact, that it contributed to the success of our arms in the memorable events that followed. Industriously circulated among the people, somewhat exaggerated perhaps, it caused bands of patriots to flock to the American camp, determined to resist an enemy guilty of such merciless barbarities. How far the defeat of Burgoyne at Saratoga may be attributed to the indignant feeling thus aroused, has been the subject of curious speculation. The exaggerations of the Americans on one hand, and the exculpatory versions of the British on the other, have given rise to many contradictory statements; but the following, drawn from an examination of them all, and also from personal interviews with several aged people in the vicinity whose memories extend back beyond that time, is presumed to be the most detailed and correct history of her life that has yet appeared. A number of the descendants of her family are yet living, and to them we are especially indebted for particulars relative to her earlier years.

Jane Mc Crea was born at Lamington, New Jersey, about the year 1757. Her father, James Mc Crea, was a Presbyterian clergyman. He was a native of Scotland; but emigrating shortly

previous to her birth, had settled in New Jersey, where, until his death, he continued to perform the duties appertaining to his sacred calling with remarkable zeal and ability. At an early age, she met with an irreparable loss in the death of her mother, whom she never ceased, while living, to hold in most affectionate remembrance.

Some accounts assert that her father remarried; and there is a vague tradition that it was on this occasion she was influenced, by motives of a domestic character, to take her departure from his house. This, however, is not entitled to credit; for certain it is, she remained with her surviving parent until his death, and, it is said, performed towards him every kind and tender office that filial affection could suggest.

At this time she had reached the age of about sixteen; and, however much the various stories relative to her subsequent fate may contradict each other, all agree that she was a young lady of fine accomplishments, great personal attraction, and remarkable sweetness of disposition. Her father being a man somewhat devoted to literary pursuits, she found in his library the means of gratifying a natural taste for reading, not enjoyed by many of her age in those early times. The serious character of the works to which she was thus permitted access, as well as the influence of pious parental instruction, had given a religious hue to the current of her reflections, and in some measure subdued a spirit by nature sprightly and vivacious.

The late Mrs. Neilson, of Bemus Heights, who was her friend and neighbor, gives this description of her personal appearance. "At the time of her death, she was of middling stature, finely formed, dark hair, and uncommonly beautiful." Gen. Gates, also, in a letter addressed to Burgoyne upon the subject of Indian cruelties, speaks of her as "a young lady lovely to the sight, of virtuous character and amiable disposition." She is described by another as "so graceful in manners, and so intelligent in features, that she was the favorite of all who knew her."* In fine, wherever history has recorded the testimony of those who knew her, she is spoken of in the language of admiration.

Among her father's neighbors in New Jersey, was the family of Jones, consisting of a widow and six sons, Jonathan, John, Dunham, Daniel, David, and Solomon. A close intimacy existed between the families, which had been of long and uninterrupted continuance. From infancy the children had been playmates; and as they grew to maturity, and went abroad into the world to prepare homes for themselves, the friendships of youth were not forgotten.

John Mc Crea, brother of Jenny, was one of those hardy adventurers who, at an early period, pressing forward beyond the borders of civilization, erected their rude habitations in the wilderness. Arrived at the age of manhood, with a family grow-

* Lossing's Field Book, vol. i, p. 99, note.

ing up around him, he began to consider the prospects before him. The acquisition of cheap, wild lands, which would increase in value as his children advanced in years, suggested itself as the surest project of securing to them ultimately a respectable competence. Disregarding the laborious life to which it would necessarily subject himself, he resolved to undertake it. Turning away from the scenes of his youth, he ascended the Hudson, and following the "great pass between the French and English settlements in North America," established himself on the right bank of that river, a few miles south of Fort Edward. Here, having cleared a small space, and constructed a simple dwelling, he entered upon the task of subduing those ancient forests, which have since given place to stately mansions and cultivated fields.

A short time subsequently, through his influence undoubtedly, the Jones family also ascended the Hudson, and settled a few miles north of him on the same shore of the river. The elder sons, soon after marrying, located in the vicinity,—Daniel, whose name has since become somewhat conspicuous, obtaining a large tract of land, near the place now known as Moss street, in the town of Kingsbury. John also selected a residence in its immediate neighborhood; while David and Solomon, youngest of the sons, remained at the homestead with their mother.

Among the friends and associates of Jenny's

youth, besides the Joneses, was a Miss Campbell, of the city of New York. Her father was a seafaring man, and in one of his voyages was swept overboard and lost, during a violent tempest off the Irish coast. Mrs. Campbell soon after married a Mr. Mc Niel, who also died at sea. After this event she removed with her daughter to an estate, owned by him, covering part of the present site of the village of Fort Edward. She was born and bred among the Highlands of Scotland, and connected both by blood and marriage with many of the most distinguished families in her native country. Mrs. Mc Niel was a woman who had visited many lands, and who was possessed of an exhaustless fund of interesting intelligence, but was more remarkable perhaps for extreme corpulency, than for any peculiar characteristic.

When Jane Mc Crea, therefore, was left an orphan, at the age of sixteen, the most intimate of her friends and the nearest of her kindred were just established in their new abodes on the upper waters of the Hudson. Though at that time it was indeed an uninviting region, the ties of friendship and consanguinity would naturally conspire, in her lonely situation, to turn her attention thitherward. An attraction, however, stronger than these induced Jenny to share with gladness the fortunes of her brother, and to count as nothing the deprivations of a home in the forest. Years before, when they were children, playing about the doors of their old homes

in New Jersey, a mutual affection had grown up between her and David Jones, which neither distance nor absence was able to abate.

David Jones was one, if tradition describes him truly, well calculated to attract attention. Besides a handsome and manly form, he possessed an easy affability and grace of manner, in striking contrast with many a stout, rough-mannered youth, familiar only with such lessons of refinement as are taught in the solitude of the woods. He is described as a young man of exceeding promise, as gay, social, brave, and generous, qualities which did not fail to render him popular among his companions. That his heart overflowed with tenderest emotions towards the object of his passion, is evidenced by the violence of his grief over her bloody tresses, and the sad and melancholy life he ever afterwards led.

When Jane came to reside with her brother, a large portion of their time was passed in each other's society. The attachment which had budded in childhood soon ripened and expanded into the full-blown flower. Whenever she visited her young friend, Miss Campbell, at the Fort—whenever she sailed upon the river, or galloped on horseback along its shores, David was her invariable escort and companion. It may be readily supposed, as traditionary accounts inform us, that his feet had indeed worn a path through the woodland to the door of her dwelling, and that he never returned from the hunt, or from excursions of business or

pleasure to neighboring settlements, without passing it on his way. This does not appear to be entirely fictitious, nor even very greatly exaggerated, when we consider not only the natural desire a youth of his ardent and social temperament would cherish to seek the presence of the mistress of his heart, but also the further authenticated fact, that among the scattered inhabitants for leagues around, it was well understood that David and Jenny were betrothed.

The hardships and inconveniences incident to a life in a newly-settled district, were more than counterbalanced by the happiness they enjoyed. As the day approached which was to witness the consummation of their hopes by the ceremonial of marriage, they gave themselves up to delightful anticipations. In the morning of life, full of health and vigor, confident in the knowledge of reciprocated affection, and unconscious of impending danger, there was indeed no apparent reason why they should not indulge the most sanguine dreams.

Events, however, were close at hand, they had not foreseen. This fatal region, which, a few years previous, had been the "arena upon which most of the battles for the mastery of the colonies had been contested," was destined again to become the theater of strife,—its woods and valleys to resound once more with the war-whoop and the fierce clang of arms; and in the savage tumult, God had ordered that the paths of this affianced pair should

separate,—one passing, through an awful scene of violence, down the valley of death; the other, a crazed and melancholy man, down the more fearful valley of his life.

CHAPTER II.

Early Settlement of the District—Kind Feeling among the Settlers—Their Simplicity of Character—The Spirit of the Revolution exhibits itself—Its Effects on Social Intercourse—Lingering Attachment to Great Britain—Capture of Ticonderoga—Excitement it created—The Invasion of Canada—Phillip Schuyler—John McCrea joins the Patriots—John and Daniel Jones, the Royalists—David Jones conceals his Sentiments—Jenny's Fears and Anxieties.

NOTWITHSTANDING the territory in the neighborhood of Fort Edward had been the scene of extensive military operations for many years, in consequence of its proximity to the French frontiers and the avarice of provincial governors,* it remained a comparative wilderness till the period of the Revolution. "The great carrying place" is frequently mentioned in our earliest annals, but chiefly as the only obstacle preventing a continuous water communication from Canada southward to the sea. An eminent American author,† in a work which has immortalized his name, describing the situation of this particular district during the third year of the French and Indian war, uses the following language:— "While the husbandman shrank back from the

* Fitch's History of Washington County. † Cooper.

dangerous passes, within the safer boundaries of the more ancient settlements, armies larger than those that had often disposed of the sceptres of the mother countries, were seen to bury themselves in these forests, whence they never re-issued but in skeleton bands, that were haggard with care, or dejected by defeat. Though the arts of peace were unknown to this deadly region, its forests were alive with men; its glades and glens rang with the sounds of martial music; and the echoes of its mountains threw back the laugh or repeated the wanton cry of many a gallant and reckless youth, as he hurried by them, in the noontide of his spirits, to slumber in a long night of forgetfulness."

Immediately following the treaty of peace, concluded in 1763, by the terms of which the English became masters of Canada, the settlement of the country steadily advanced. Discharged soldiers returning to their homes, and who had not failed to observe the fertile lands along the Hudson, now no longer apprehensive of barbarous molestation, gathered together their effects, and came from distant places to reside upon its shores. While the Durkees, and Paynes, and others from New England, established themselves on the eastern, the western side of the river was settled principally by families from New Jersey, among whom were the Joneses and McCreas.

The quiet which followed the treaty of Paris, it was fondly hoped would be of long continuance.—

The excitements of border warfare had wholly subsided; the rifle was laid aside for the axe, and the sounds of peaceful industry everywhere succeeded the cries of terror and the fierce clamor of contending enemies. The husbandman went forth to his labors, fearing not that he might find his home in ashes and his household murdered on his return.—There was no longer any apprehension of such calamities; and, as the sturdy trees fell before his well-directed blows, and the virgin soil received from his hands new and unaccustomed seeds, he looked confidently forward to the time when the harvest might be gathered in peace.

Too far separated to admit of interference, remote from populous towns, and dependent in a great measure upon the neighborly kindness of each other, a strong friendly feeling bound together, as a band of brothers, all these dwellers in the forests. At log-rollings and fallow-burnings and house-raisings, they came from miles away to render assistance without reward. In the evening they gathered around the simple board, discoursing of crops, and cattle, and prices in the distant market; or, if their thoughts chanced to turn in the direction of the past, they recounted the story of the "Bloody Run,"* the massacre of Fort William Henry, and

* Bloody Run is a small stream, affording fine trout-fishing, which comes leaping in sparkling cascades from the hills, in the neighborhood of Fort Miller. It derives its name from the fact, that while the English had possession of the Fort in 1759, a party

many a fearful tragedy of more troublous times, as yet fresh within their memories.

The young people also were accustomed to assemble together, coming long distances over the hills and through winding wood-paths, to play and dance in the light of the flaming logs, that filled the capacious fire-place in the log mansion of the settler. And if aged matrons can be credited, who are wont to recount, with a melancholy sigh, the stories of their youth, there was a hearty, unaffected sociality in their pastimes, altogether unknown in these degenerate days. They led a simple but happy life, ignorant of the luxuries and formalities of their descendants.

The early inhabitants along the Hudson, were thus dwelling together in primitive simplicity, when a spirit began to spread abroad in the land, that was destined, ere it could be allayed, not only to destroy the character of their happy intercourse, but to mark an important era in the history of the world. Clouds again were gathering in the political horizon, that foreboded an approaching storm. Sounds of disaffection, at first faint and indistinct, arose from the chief towns along the coast, and as they assumed

of soldiers from the garrison went out on a fishing excursion. The hills, now cultivated, were then covered with dense forests, and afforded the Indians excellent ambush. A troop of savages lying near, sprang silently from their covert upon the fishers, and bore off nine scalps before those who escaped could reach the Fort and give the alarm.—*Lossing's Field Book*, vol. i., p. 94.

a more loud and defiant tone, at length penetrated to the most remote abodes. New themes began to suggest themselves to the contemplation of the people. Those ordinary topics which had hitherto afforded subjects of comment and discussion, were dismissed for lengthy disquisitions on the question of political rights. In the progress of the controversy, the minds of men became embittered, and friends and neighbors who had dwelt together for years in social harmony, began to array themselves against each other.

While many of those to whom we have referred, urged by a sense of political oppression, espoused the cause of the complaining colonists, others, and many of them unquestionably actuated by honorable and conscientious motives, still adhered to that royal house to which their ancestors had yielded allegiance. They might indeed have felt aggrieved with the unjust legislation to which they were subjected; nevertheless they aspired not to political independence, but looked earnestly forward to reconciliation and redress. They still cherished the love of country for which their fathers were distinguished, and were proud of their connection with that mighty realm, everywhere victorious in arms, and at that time the most powerful nation of the earth. The magnitude of their grievances was insufficient to alienate their affections altogether from the land of whose glorious history they were fain to boast, and

in whose soil reposed the ashes of those from whom they were descended.*

When the scene of agitation, however, was suddenly transferred from the neighborhood of Boston to their own immediate vicinity, it was necessary for them to assume their distinct position, on one side or the other of the controversy. Though there were in fact two classes of royalists, the active and passive, they were alike regarded by their opponents as the enemies of liberty. Previous to the month of May, 1775, the general attention was directed to scenes enacting within the limits of Massachusetts Bay. Throughout the sparsely settled districts in the interior, the excitement had not arisen to the height of violence it had attained in the eastern portion of that Province. The capture of their neighbor, Major Skene, of Skenesborough, however, and the taking of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, by Ethan Allen and Seth Warner, on the tenth and twelfth of that month, aroused, as might well be supposed, throughout the surrounding region, emo-

* Dr. Franklin was examined before the British House of Commons, and in answer to a question proposed to him concerning the feeling of the people of America towards Great Britain, replied—"They had not only a respect, but an affection for Great Britain, for its laws, its customs and its manners, and even a fondness for its fashions that greatly increased the commerce. Natives of Britain were always treated with particular regard, and to be an *Old Englandman* was of itself a character of some respect, and gave a kind of rank among us."—*Examination of Franklin before the House of Commons, in relation to the Stamp Act.*

tions of the most intense and exciting character.—The design of the expedition, and the expedition itself, had been kept a profound secret as far as possible. It had not received the avowed sanction of any public body. The whole plan was of a private nature, having the *tacit* approbation only of the Assembly of Connecticut.

While, therefore, the Continental Congress, then in session at Philadelphia, received the news of this unexpected and bold adventure with some degree of alarm, those residing near the captured fortresses were utterly overwhelmed. The intelligence that Lake Champlain was in possession of the patriots, startled them as would a clap of thunder in an unclouded day. Grim-visaged war, so long threatened, was come at last, and had shown his wrinkled front at their very doors. The husbandman left his fields, the mechanic his workshop; and seizing those arms which, during the interval of peace, had rusted on the wall, arranged themselves respectively on the side they had espoused.

Before the excitement, produced by the capture of Ticonderoga, was allayed, to wit, in the month of June following, the invasion of Canada was determined upon. By a resolution of Congress, General Schuyler was appointed to the command of the expedition. Three thousand men from New England and New York, were designed for this service, and fifty thousand dollars in specie voted to defray expenses.

Schuyler was at New York when this important command was entrusted to him. He hastened at once to Ticonderoga to make the necessary arrangements for the enterprise, and on his way thither, up the Hudson, exerted his utmost influence to increase the excitement already existing among the settlers. He inflamed their minds with repetitions of the wrongs imposed upon them, in glowing and indignant terms; everywhere infusing into the hearts of his countrymen, a portion of that patriotic spirit that burned in his own bosom.

From the commencement of difficulties, John McCrea leaned to the patriot side. As the absorbing questions of the day were more and more discussed among his neighbors, he became, at length, the advocate and champion of their cause. And now, when armed men were following Montgomery over the "Great Path" to Canada, he was found among them. When the call to arms first rang through the settlements of Saratoga, none obeyed it more readily than John McCrea, and his less fortunate acquaintance, Joseph Bettys.*

* Joseph Bettys, or, as he was better known in those days, "Joe Bettys," was an ardent whig at the opening of the war. He was a native of Saratoga County, and fought bravely in the attack upon Quebec. He was also on board the *Washington* galley, commanded by General Waterbury, in the desperate naval action between Arnold and the British fleet on Lake Champlain, Oct. 13th, 1776, and was taken prisoner and carried to Canada. While a captive he was induced to join the royal standard, and was made an ensign. He afterwards became notorious as a spy, and having

McCrea, however, was not accompanied on this occasion, by any of the sons of widow Jones. His old companions, more particularly John and Daniel, who resided at Kingsbury, were conspicuous tories, and had rendered themselves obnoxious on that account. The entire family were regarded as friendly to the royal cause; though Jonathan and David, as yet, remained uncommitted to either side. The motives that induced the latter to suppress the sentiments he entertained in common with his elder brethren, can easily be conceived. John McCrea had imbibed the strong prejudices and animosities prevalent in his time; and no tory, whether he came to woo his sister, or on any other errand, would have found a welcome in his house. Already he was estranged from John and Daniel Jones, denouncing them in unmeasured language, as the enemies of freedom, notwithstanding they had been the playmates of his youth, and the closest of his companions in later years.

David, however, continued his visits, as usual, though he was not received by the patriot with that cordiality with which he was wont to greet him.—

been taken on one occasion by the Americans, was conducted to the gallows. He was, however, reprieved by Washington, at the instance of his friends, especially his aged and venerable parents, on condition of his no more aiding the enemies of America. But, false to his promise, he immediately rejoined the British; and for years his incendiarism and cold-blooded murders, made his name a terror in the region of his former residence. Finally, in 1782, he was retaken, and executed at Albany, as a spy and traitor.

Anxious to avoid a rupture which might interfere with the successful prosecution of his suit, he was cautious in the declaration of his sentiments. In fact, in the presence of his prospective brother-in-law, he feigned rather than otherwise, to coincide with him in opinion. Nevertheless, he was a royalist at heart, and secretly determined, if the exigencies of the times should demand his services, to join the standard of his king.

For more than a year after the actual commencement of hostilities, he maintained his neutral position, taking no part, and to outward appearances feeling little interest, in the result of the contest.—During that period, however, he had disclosed to Jenny his real sentiments. In many a long interview, he dwelt upon the folly of resisting England, characterizing the war as a hopeless rebellion, destined to a speedy and disastrous termination. He deplored the infatuation that had induced her brother, not only to espouse an unworthy cause, but which had also created a bitterness towards his family, and an evident coldness towards himself.

For the first time, presentiments of approaching trouble began to disturb them. A shadow had fallen on their path. The youthful wooer could illy brook the restraint imposed on himself; and Jenny's imagination thronged with horrors, when he spoke of leaving her for a time, to share in the dangers and glory of the war. She trembled also for her brother's safety, now absent with the northern

army. Daily rumors of sieges and battles, exaggerated as they passed from mouth to mouth, overcame her with alarm. Withal, she knew not how soon the plighted lover of her youth might also be found in arms. She knew right well, however, the standard he would seek; and terrible was the thought indeed, that those two, nearest and dearest of all the world to her, should ever meet each other in the shock of battle.

Earnestly the dark-haired girl prayed for the return of peace; for the time to come when the sword should be laid aside, and "war's alarms" should cease. Alas! she little dreamed that before the lapse of another year her name, ringing through the land, would arouse indignant men to arms, and in the hour of battle add fierceness to the strife.

CHAPTER III.

John Mc Crea returns from Canada—Gloomy prospects of the Americans—David Jones joins the British at Crown Point—Receives his commission at St. Johns—Accompanies Burgoyne up the Lake—The Indians assemble on the Boquet—The war-feast and dance—Burgoyne's address—Answer of the Iroquois—The pompous proclamation—Its effects in America and England—Sketch of Burgoyne's life—Scattering of the manifestos—Jane receives a letter from Jones—The substance of its contents—Le Loup, the wolf.

JOHN MC CREA at length returned from the expedition to Canada, a mortified and dejected man. He had braved innumerable dangers, endured incredible hardships, and in the end suffered the humiliation of defeat. In common with his friends, he had been sorely disappointed in the spirit of the people of the North. Instead of being received with open arms, as was anticipated, the inhabitants of the invaded province opposed them with a persevering and bloody obstinacy, that the unremitting exertions of Montgomery and the headlong courage of Arnold could not overcome. He had encountered hunger, and fatigue, and danger, and all the trials incident to a winter campaign, only to witness the fall of his commander, and the slaughter of

many brave companions in arms. He returned to meet the scoff and scorn of his tory neighbors, and to bear the dismal tidings to many a bereaved household, that it had lost a husband or father beneath the battlements of Quebec.

The affairs of the Americans, especially in the North, presented at this period a gloomy aspect indeed. The expedition which, it was warmly believed, would secure the co-operation of the Canadians, had resulted in disaster. In the progress of events, the patriots were not only driven from the territory of Canada, but the English had again established themselves in the important fortress of Crown Point, and held possession of the northern portion of the Lake. There was much to dispirit the resisting colonists in the prospect before them; while toryism lifted high its head, uttering loud and confident predictions.

Such was the situation of affairs, when David Jones, late in the autumn of 1776, resolved to remain no longer an inactive spectator of the stirring scenes around him. He had heard of the anticipated arrival at Quebec of a numerous and well-appointed British army, and doubted not but the proposed expedition would be crowned with success, and that it would terminate at once a foolish and unjustifiable rebellion.

In his conversations with Jane, he dwelt upon the absolute certainty of such a result. He depicted the peaceful times that would ensue—a

return of those happy days when husbandmen were singing in the fields, and before the voices of love were drowned by the bitter clamor of contention. The feud which had sprung up between members of their families, would then cease. Then—so ran the current of their hopes,—old friends would re-unite over the grave of forgotten animosities, and the spirit of good fellowship would return with their allegiance to a lawful king. None waited with more intense anxiety than they, for the coming of a day of peace.

For obvious reasons, they were now accustomed to meet at the house of Mrs. Mc Niel, situated a short distance from the Fort. Here it was their last interview occurred. Jenny's intimacy with Miss Campbell afforded sufficient pretext for frequent visits; while a similarity of opinion between her mother and young Jones, secured for him, at all times, a cordial welcome.

It was with many misgivings and apprehensions on the part of the affectionate maiden, that she yielded, at length, a reluctant consent to the step her lover proposed to take: which was, to give out among his neighbors that he intended to join the Americans at Ticonderoga, when his real design was to pass that fortress, and unite with the opposing forces in Canada. In one so high spirited, it is to be presumed that some ambitious longings for distinction mingled with his more tender emotions. His intimate knowledge of the country, through

which lay the proposed rout of the invaders, would enable him to render profitable service, and perhaps afford him an opportunity of securing the favorable notice of his commander—possibly of his king. At least, it never occurred to him but that he would return with a victorious army, destined to suppress an audacious rebellion, and to receive the adulation of history.

Having arranged to communicate to each other as frequently as opportunity presented, through the agency of a man of doubtful patriotism, by the name of Alexander Freel,—and having renewed their vows, with many earnest assurances of constancy, the plighted couple separated, at the house of Mrs. Mc Niel. Jane returned to her brother's family, on the opposite shore of the river; while David in company with his brother Jonathan, and some sixty others, set out for the North, representing, to the patriots at least, that they were on their way to join the garrison at Ticonderoga.

The whole party, however, either as originally intended, or influenced by the persuasive eloquence and flattering representations of the brothers Jones, who were the leading spirits of the little company, avoided Ticonderoga, and pushing hastily forward down the Lake, presented themselves at Crown Point, proffering their services to the British officer then in command of that place.

Soon after, they proceeded to St. Johns, where they remained until the arrival of Burgoyne, in the

Spring of 1777. Previous to their departure from thence, both brothers were honored with commissions in the British service, Jonathan as captain, and David as lieutenant in the same company. They acted in the capacity of pilots and pioneers,—a service they were eminently enabled to perform, from a familiar acquaintance with localities in the contemplated route of the invading forces.

The detachment under St. Leger, having departed upon its destination to the valley of the Mohawk, the main body, consisting of upwards of seven thousand men, sailed from St. Johns on the first of June. Halting a short time, to collect a quantity of stores, at Cumberland Head, a spot since rendered famous in our naval history, as the scene of Mc Donough's victory, the formidable armament proceeded to a point on the west shore of the Lake, a number of leagues farther to the south.

Here, in the gloom of a thick forest, on the banks of the Boquet, a small, romantic river that comes bubbling down from the lofty mountains on the west, Burgoyne directed his army to encamp. At this spot, he awaited the arrival of those savage allies which the mistaken and cruel policy of England had instructed him to employ. Extensive preparations were made for their reception; here was to be held the grand council, and here were the dusky warriors to be entertained with a war-feast, after the manner of their tribes.

It is but justice to the memory of Burgoyne, and

still more to the memory of Carleton, Governor of Canada, to record the fact that both of them were averse to the employment of these barbarians. Their former experience had taught them that their presence was an encumbrance rather than otherwise. The extreme repugnance of the Governor to such a measure, has been assigned as one of the principal causes of his not being entrusted with the conduct of the campaign. His ambitious rival yielded more readily to the positive instructions of the ministry, though it is apparent from the tenor of his speech on the shore of the Boquet, that he discountenanced the thought of indiscriminate bloodshed. His fatal error, not only on this but subsequent occasions, sprang from an overweening confidence in his own influence—an influence he vainly flattered himself was sufficiently powerful to restrain the ferocious spirit of the savage, within the limit of civilized humanity.

Headed by a priest of Rome, the chiefs and their followers, decked with feathers and hideous with war-paint, made their appearance in camp. They exceeded four hundred in number, coming from remote parts of Canada, and were chiefly of the tribes of Algonquins, Ottawas, and Iroquois. Their arrival was attended with great pomp and ceremony. At the feast which followed, they sang their traditionary songs, and in exulting language, dwelt upon the extent of their history, and the ancient glory of their fathers. Frequently

they pointed to rude pictures of the deer, the squirrel, and the oak, imprinted on their bodies—the armorial devices of their respective tribes. Then followed the war-dance, the entire band moving in a circle, whooping, brandishing their tomahawks, imitating the act of scalping, of lying in ambush, the sudden attack, the struggle, the carnage and the victory, thus representing how they should vanquish the enemies of their great father beyond the sea.

It was the 21st of June, that these scenes were enacted in the presence of Burgoyne's army. Never before had such wild and warlike voices rung through the little valley of Boquet. At the conclusion of these ceremonies, the barbarians were assembled to listen to the great chief. Burgoyne, approaching with a dignified air, and arrayed in magnificent uniform, addressed them through an interpreter, in a speech remarkable for its singular energy and adroitness.

He explained to them the peculiar character of the controversy in which they were about to engage. It was not a common enemy whom he was going forth to conquer; but, on the contrary, a large proportion of the inhabitants of the country, still remained faithful to their sovereign. These were entitled to and should receive his protection. Old men, women, children, and prisoners should be spared; those only who were found in arms should be put to death; those only who were slain in battle, should be scalped.

"I positively forbid bloodshed," he remarked, "when you are not opposed in arms. You shall receive compensation for the prisoners you take, but you shall be called to account for scalps. In conformity and indulgence of your customs, which have affixed an idea of honor to such badges of victory, you shall be allowed to take the scalps of the dead when killed by your fire and in fair opposition; but on no account, or pretense, or subtility, or prevarication are they to be taken from the wounded, or even the dying; and still less pardonable, if possible, will it be held to kill men in that condition on purpose, and upon a supposition that this protection to the wounded would be thereby evaded."*

He sought to explain to their comprehension, the vast difference between a war waged against an entire nation, "and the present, in which the faithful were intermixed with rebels, and traitors with friends;" to excite their ardor in the common cause to a degree that should render them an object of terror, and at the same time to regulate their passions, and repress the natural ferocity of their propensities; while, therefore, he threatened severest punishment towards those who should molest the aged, the helpless, and the prisoner, or who upon any pretext or provocation should scalp a living enemy, he also, in the same speech, gave utterance to language such as this—"Go forth in the might

* Extract from Burgoyne's Speech on the Boquet, June 21, 1777.

of your valor, and your cause; strike at the common enemies of Great Britain and of America, disturbers of public order, peace and happiness, destroyers of commerce, parricides of the state."

When he had concluded this ingenious address, intermingled with much flattering commendation of their enterprise, constancy and perseverance, which we have omitted to transcribe, a chief of the Iroquois deliberately arose to reply. Had Lieutenant Jones been permitted, at that moment, to have foreseen events, he could not have maintained the composure with which he watched the unusual scene. After a brief silence, the savage stretched forth his hand—the same hand that afterwards clutched the long, disheveled hair of Jane McCrea—and said:

"I stand up in the name of all the nations present, to assure our father that we have attentively listened to his discourse. We receive you as our father, because when you speak we hear the voice of our great father beyond the great lake. We rejoice in the approbation you have expressed of our behavior. We have been tried and tempted by the Bostonians;* but we loved our father, and our hatchets have been sharpened upon our affections. In proof of the sincerity of our professions, our whole villages able to go to war, are come forth. The old and infirm, our infants and wives, alone remain at home. With one common assent,

* Massachusetts loyalists, whom he confounded with the patriots.

we promise a constant obedience to all you have ordered and all you shall order; and may the Father of Days give you many, and success!"*

Burgoyne had the credulity to rely upon these promises, albeit to his shame and sorrow. Their ferocity was aroused as soon as their nostrils snuffed the first scent of blood, and all the restraints imposed upon them with such elaborate formality, were like ropes of sand. In the hour of triumph they marred the glory of his achievements with their butcheries; in the hour of his sorest need, they deserted him like cowards.

From this vicinity, on the 29th of June, Burgoyne sent forth that famous proclamation by which he thought to overawe the Americans with exaggerated statements of the number of Indians accompanying him, and their eagerness to be let loose upon them. "I have but to give stretch to the Indian forces under my direction, and they amount to thousands, to overtake the hardened enemies of Great Britain and America. I consider them the same, wherever they may lurk. "To those who continued quietly to pursue their occupations, he promised security and protection; those who persisted in rebellion, he threatened with terrible vengeance; and, as if to inspire the enemy with a sense of his vast consequence and overshadowing power, he commenced his swaggering manifesto as follows:— "By John Burgoyne, Esquire, Lieutenant General

* Burgoyne's "State of the Expedition," &c.

of his Majesty's forces in America; Colonel of the Queen's regiment of Light Dragoons; Governor of Fort William Henry, in North Britain; one of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament; and commanding an army and fleet, employed on an expedition from Canada."*

* "John Burgoyne was said to have been a natural son of Lord Bingley; some, however, think that he had still more important relations. In 1762 he had a command in Portugal, and was at the capture of the garrison of Almeida, on which occasion he distinguished himself. After his return to England, he was chosen a member of Parliament, for Preston, in Lancashire. He came to America in 1775, and was at Boston at the time of the battle of Bunker Hill. The same year he was dispatched to Canada, and the year following returned to England.

He was gallant, gay, learned, and eloquent. In the full sunshine of patronage, he had taken command of the northern army, and indulged the hope of a brilliant campaign. The fates were against him, and he was obliged to give up all his splendid visions of glory, and prepare to defend himself before his king and country. In this he was able; and one would think that he had offered a sufficient excuse for every thing but his ignorance of the foe he was to meet. The ministers were mortified and distressed at his unexpected failure, and to turn the popular indignation from themselves, they sacrificed their favorite. They ordered him to return forthwith to England as a prisoner; but this was not insisted on; yet he was obliged to resign his emoluments, which were considerable. He was still returned to Parliament, and joined the opposition to the continuance of the war, contending that America would prevail. From the peace of 1783, he lived a retired life, until the 4th of August, 1792, when he died, as it was stated in the papers of that day, of an attack of the gout. An American royalist, who was in England, and resided within a few doors of his dwelling, stated that he fell by his own hand, a prey to disappointment and neglect. There never arose a man in Great Britain, who for a time held so

The only effect of this pompous array of titles, and these merciless threats of vengeance, was to render him an object of ridicule among his enemies, and to bring down upon his head the animadversions of his friends. "From the manner in which he has arrayed his titles," says Dr. Thatcher, in his Military Journal, "we are led to suppose that he considers them as more than a match for all the military force we can bring against him;" and Botta, alluding to it, remarks, "This manifesto, so little worthy the general of a civilized nation, was justly censured, not only in the two houses of Parliament, and throughout Great Britain, but excited the indignation of every generous mind in all Europe."

Copies of this proclamation were scattered far and wide. One of those who set out from camp to circulate them in the vicinity of Fort Edward, carried a letter to Jane Mc Crea, from Lieutenant Jones, which, through Freel's assistance, in due time, reached its destination. Prudence demanded the destruction of this epistle, but the fact of its reception was communicated to Mrs. Mc Niel, through whom the substance of its contents has been preserved.

many important offices, and on whom so much reliance was placed, of whom the world knew so little. A mystery hung about him from the cradle to the grave, and that, too, in a country where there are but few secrets of any domestic or political nature."—*Note to Hinton's "History and Topography of the United States,"* vol. i., p. 263.

He recounted in it his adventures from the time of their separation; described the splendid appearance of the army as they sailed up the Lake, the arrival of the Indians on the Boquet, the war feast and dance; sketched the dignified manner in which Burgoyne delivered his address, and the equally dignified demeanor of the savage who made reply. As she pondered over the description of the latter, and smiled, perhaps, as his grotesque figure presented itself to her imagination, it was well that the Almighty had not given her to know, that the light of her young life would go out beneath the stare of that same grim and painted savage, upon whom the old followers of Montcalm, had appropriately bestowed the appellation of *Le Loup*—the wolf!

CHAPTER IV.

Lieutenant Jones assigned to Fraser's Division—Burgoyne approaches Ticonderoga—Occupation of Mount Hope, and Mount Defiance—Origin of the names of the three mountains—Critical situation of St. Clair—The Council of War—Evacuation of the Fort—The Conflagration on Mount Independence—Flight of the Americans—The battle of Hubbardton—The Patriots defeated—Sketch of the life of Warner—Colonel Hale vindicated—Sketch of the life of St. Clair—The American galleys overtaken at Skenesborough—Flight towards Fort Edward—Burgoyne halts to refresh his army.

LIEUTENANT JONES, upon receiving his commission, was assigned to the division under Brigadier General Fraser, Commander of the Grenadiers and Light Infantry.* This brave but unfortunate General, who was slain in the battle of Saratoga, and whose ashes still repose upon the summit of a mountain within the "great redoubt," where they were deposited in obedience to his dying wish, was an own cousin and intimate acquaintance of Mrs. Mc Niel.†

His division, upon the departure of the royal army from Crown Point, where it had halted for three days, to establish a magazine and hospital, moved along the west bank of the lake in the direc-

* Lossing, i., 98. † Neilson, p. 71.

tion of Ticonderoga. The German reserve, under Lieutenant-Colonel Breymau, at the same time advanced along the east shore; while the remaining forces, under Burgoyne himself, on board the frigates Royal George, the Inflexible, and several gun boats, sailed up the lake between the two wings on land.

Instead of making a direct assault upon Fort Ticonderoga, as its American Commander, St. Clair, expected, and under the circumstances desired, Generals Phillips and Fraser proceeded to take possession of Mount Hope, thus depriving the patriots of all supplies from the direction of Lake George. Such was the activity and energy displayed, that on the 4th of July Fraser's whole corps occupied Mount Hope: the post was well fortified with artillery, and supplied with ammunition and stores.

Across the bay, at the outlet of Lake George, in a southwest direction from the fort, arose Sugar Loaf Hill, its lofty summit overlooking all the country round. Lieutenant Twiss, Chief Engineer, having reconnoitered it, reported that it completely commanded not only the whole promontory of Ticonderoga, but also the works on Mount Independence, a less elevated height upon the eastern shore. He reported also, that though difficult, a road to the top of Sugar Loaf, suitable for the conveyance of cannon, was practicable, and might be made in the course of twenty-four hours. Accordingly, eight twelve-pounders, eight-inch howitzers, &c., were

landed from the Thunderer, which carried the battery train, and stores. During the night of the 4th, the soldiers labored with incredible energy, and with such secrecy and success that by sunrise on the morning of the 5th, to the utter astonishment of the Americans, heavy artillery, surrounded by a scarlet host, crowned the bald summit of the Hill. As the British looked down upon the appalled enemy beneath, their cheers, hearty and prolonged, filled the clear morning air with clamorous confusion. Confident in a sense of their impregnable position, and of the inability of any power to dislodge them, they gave the name of Mount Defiance to Sugar Loaf Hill—a name by which it has ever since been designated.*

General St. Clair had not deemed it necessary or perhaps possible, to occupy this formidable position. In the more modern warfare of the country, it would not have been neglected a single hour. "This sort of contempt for eminences, or rather dread of the labor of ascending them, might have been termed the besetting weakness of the warfare of the period.† It originated in the simplicity of the Indian contests, in which, from the nature of the combats, and the density of the forests, fortresses were rare, and artillery next to useless. The carelessness engendered by these usages, descended even to the war of the Revolution, and lost the States the important fortress of Ticonderoga, opening a way

* Lossing's Pic. Field Book, vol. i, p. 134, note.
† 1757.

for the army of Burgoyne, into what was then the bosom of the country. We look back at this ignorance or infatuation, whichever it may be called, with astonishment, knowing that the neglect of an eminence whose difficulties, like those of Mount Defiance, had been so greatly exaggerated, would at the present time prove fatal to the reputation of the engineer who had planned the works at their base, or that of the general whose lot it was to defend them."*

Meanwhile, Major General Reidisel, who, with the German division had encamped at Three Mile Point, pushed forward a detachment along the east shore of the lake opposite the fort, as far as East Creek, a stream that flows into Champlain, along the northern base of Mount Independence.†

Fort Ticonderoga was situated upon a sharp point of land at the junction of the waters of the two lakes. A somewhat correct idea of its situation perhaps, might be obtained, by describing it as the center of a triangle, of which Mounts Hope, Independence and Defiance are the angles. The British fleet was anchored just beyond reach of the American guns: the British lines extended on one side to

* Cooper.

† Mount Independence received its name from the troops stationed there on the 18th July, 1776,—the day the news arrived, by courier, of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. Mount Hope was christened by General Fraser, from the fact that he entertained the *hope*, on ascending it, of being able to dislodge the Americans.

East Creek, on the other, from the lake to Mount Hope and from thence to Mount Defiance; so that, save a narrow passage towards the south, the Americans were entirely surrounded. Only the ground between East Creek and what, at that day, was termed South River remained open; and this, General St. Clair was informed, would be occupied next day, by pushing the German detachments across East Creek in the rear of Independence, so that the investment would then be complete.*

The situation of the Americans was now at its crisis. With the enemy looking down into the fortress; without hope of succor; without provisions to sustain a siege; and with a force insufficient to withstand an attack; about to be hemmed in on every side; St. Clair seemed, for the first time, to awaken to a sense of the perils that environed him.

He called a council of war, and having presented these alarming facts, proposed to evacuate the place without delay, a step which prudence should have dictated before, and for the neglect of which, he has received the condemnation of history.† That nothing could now save the troops but evacuation, seemed palpable to the officers of the council, and they agreed at once to the proposition of the commander. The determination of the council, however, was concealed from the troops until the

* Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. i., p. 190.

† Botta, vol. i., p. 456.

evening order was given, inasmuch as every movement by daylight would be discovered from the heights of Mount Defiance.

The usual quiet, therefore, was maintained within the fort, until the darkness of the night had hidden them from the eyes of those who rested on the adjacent hills. Then commenced the preparation for retreat. Two hundred batteaux were loaded with baggage, ammunition, and stores—the cannon that could not be removed were spiked; each soldier provided himself with several days' provision; every light was extinguished—every tent was struck. After midnight, the garrison moved silently down the descent to the water side, and unperceived crossed the bridge to Mount Independence. The two hundred batteaux, preceded by a convoy of five armed galleys, under Colonel Long, glided up the narrow channel, and noiselessly disappeared within the shadows of the mountains.

The pale light of the moon did not disclose the movements of the Americans. The sound from the direction of Mount Defiance indicated that a thousand warriors were reposing on its rugged summit. The cannonading that was kept up towards Mount Hope, for the purpose of allaying suspicion, gradually became less frequent, and finally ceased altogether. Darkness and silence rested upon the water and the land. It was evident that the wariness of their movements, had eluded the most

watchful of the enemy's sentinels. It was arranged that the main body, proceeding by the way of Castleton, should join the batteaux at Skenesborough, then an inconsiderable hamlet at the Falls of Wood Creek. Elated with success thus far, the flying soldiers were congratulating themselves with the assurance that their adroitness had eluded the enemy, until such time as they might prefer to encounter him under better auspices, and on a more favorable field.

Suddenly, a broad, fierce flame ascended through the gloom, from the top of Independence, illuminating the whole mountain side, and casting its rays far out upon the waters. General de Fermoy, commander of the post, not only with culpable indiscretion, but in violation of express orders, had set fire to the house he occupied, as the troops were leaving. Conscious of discovery, the republicans were thrown into great confusion. In the light of the conflagration, the enemy discovered at a glance the movement that had taken place, and beheld the forms of the Americans, as they fled over the brow of the hill, in disordered haste, towards the disastrous field of Hubbardton.

The moment the retreat was discovered, all was bustle and commotion throughout the British lines. The surrounding heights, so late the abodes of silence, resounded with the hum of voices. The cannon thundered on Mount Defiance, and forthwith,

the startled slumbers on the neighboring eminence replied to the noisy summons, as when—

"——Jura answers from her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, that call to her aloud."

Gen. Fraser, placing himself at the head of a detachment of light troops, leaving orders for his brigade to follow him, hurried across the plain, and entered the deserted fort. Just as day was breaking in the east, the flag of England unfurled its ample folds above the walls of Ticonderoga. Without delay he hastened over the bridge to Mount Independence, and, followed by Reidesel and his Brunswickers, pressed eagerly forward in the track of the flying patriots. The strong boom upon which the Americans had placed so much reliance, was speedily broken through, and soon the whole flotilla, under Burgoyne himself, who was on board the Royal George, swept up the lake in pursuit of the batteaux. All was in movement at once, both on land and water.

The following night, General St. Clair, with the vanguard of the army, arrived at Castleton, thirty miles from Ticonderoga. The rear guard, consisting of three regiments, under Colonels Warner, Hale, and Francis, halted at Hubbardton, six miles short of that place. These, together with stragglers from the advanced body, who, from excessive fatigue had fallen out of the line of march, and had been picked up on the way, amounted to rather more than one thousand men.*

* Marshall, vol. i., p. 191.

It was a warm, bright morning, when the battle of Hubbardton commenced.* The first settlement of the town, had been made only three years previous, and at that time nine families constituted its entire population.† Save a few scattered clearings, its whole surface was covered with an unbroken forest. Upon a table land, surrounded on the south and east by lofty hills, the Americans were encamped. While breakfasting here, about five o'clock in the morning, they were discovered by a party of tory scouts, of whom, tradition has it, David Jones was one. However that may be, it is certain he was in the battle that ensued, and acquitted himself with a gallantry that elicited the commendation of his superiors.

Fraser's force was but eight hundred strong, yet, fearing the Americans might escape, and expecting every moment the arrival of the Germans, he immediately began the attack. There was no time for the erection of breastworks. Hastily stationing themselves upon the height of land, the patriots awaited the charge in silence. The assault was well received, and for a long time the battle raged furiously along the slope. Presently it was discovered that Earl Balcarras and his grenadiers, who had been dispatched by Fraser to cover his right wing, had gained the Castleton road, thus cutting off retreat in that direction. In the meantime, Hale, with his

* July 7, 1777.

† Thompson's Gazetteer of Vermont.

troops, had fled towards Castleton, and meeting a party of British soldiers, in number about equal to his own, surrendered without resistance.

Finding themselves in such a fearful strait, the remaining regiments fell upon the grenadiers with a reckless desperation that the firmest valor was unable to oppose. The grenadiers gave way; the advantage they had gained was lost. Inch by inch the British were losing ground. In the midst of the fiery tempest, above the roar and clamor of the battle, was heard the loud voice of Warner, cheering on his men. Victory was almost within the grasp of the patriots.

At that moment, with drums beating and banners flying, Reidesel approached. The sound of the tumult having reached his ears, unlike St. Clair, he hurried the Hessians through the rough forest paths to the assistance of their comrades. Immediately they were brought into action upon the left. At the same time the whole British line made a bayonet charge, with terrible effect. Supposing themselves overwhelmed by numbers, the Americans became panic-stricken and gave way. The brave Francis had fallen at the head of his regiment in the thickest of the fray. The voice of Warner was unavailing. In vain he called upon his companions to rally but once again.* Down the valley

* Seth Warner was a native of Woodbury, Connecticut. In youth he was noted for his skill in hunting. At the age of 29 he settled at Bennington, Vermont. He and Ethan Allen were the

towards Castleton, and over the Pittsford mountains they fled like afrighted deer. Frequently, even to this day, among broken crags and in remote places of the forest, are found rusty muskets which they cast from them in the flight.

Had Warner been sustained by Colonel Hale, in all probability the Americans would have secured a victory. His retreat and surrender were bitterly denounced at the time as acts of cowardice. History, however, more dispassionate than in those days, begins to regard his memory in a less censurable light. There were mitigating circumstances which his cotemporaries overlooked. Feeble with a disease which afterwards terminated his life, he was totally unfit for active service, as were also many of his troops. The truth is, his movement, under the circumstances, will be pronounced, when impartially scrutinized, to have been an act of wise

most conspicuous characters who figured in the controversy relative to the New Hampshire Grants. On the 9th of March, 1774, an act of outlawry was passed against him by the Legislature of New York. He was with Allen at the time of the capture of Ticonderoga, and with St. Clair at the time of its evacuation. Receiving a colonel's commission from the Continental Congress, he joined Montgomery in Canada. After the death of his general, and discharge of his regiment, he raised another body of troops, and marched to Quebec, and covered the retreat of the Americans from Canada to Ticonderoga. He was aid of General Stark at the battle of Bennington, and afterwards joined Gates at Stillwater. Failing in health, he retired, soon after, to the place of his nativity, where he died in 1785, aged forty years. In gratitude for his signal services, Vermont bestowed upon his wife and children a valuable tract of land.—*See Allen's American Biography.*

precaution, rather than of cowardly alarm. While a prisoner, he wrote the commander-in-chief, requesting him to procure his exchange, in order that he might vindicate his character by a court-martial, but died before it could be accomplished, going down to the grave overwhelmed with the calumny of unsuccessful rivals.

But history has not yet forgiven the disastrous inactivity, and equivocal conduct of St. Clair. Though he retained the partial confidence of Washington, and was afterwards elevated to offices of dignity, the most impartial historian of the Revolution pronounces his error at Ticonderoga, even though deceived respecting the real force of the enemy, to have proceeded from a defect of military skill, "so extraordinary as to admit of no excuse."* He lingered longer on the earth than most of his generation, surviving to the ripe old age of more than fourscore years. Yet he never emerged from the cloud that darkened his martial reputation, though no man ever justly questioned his patriotism or integrity.†

* Botta, i., 456.

† Arthur St. Clair was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1734, and accompanied Admiral Boscawen to America in 1755. During the years 1759 and 60, he served as a lieutenant in Canada, under General Wolfe, and after the treaty of Paris was appointed to the command of Fort Ligonier, in Pennsylvania. In 1776 he was appointed a colonel in the Continental army. The same year he was made brigadier, and participated in the engagements at Trenton and Princeton. In February, 1777, he received a major-general's

In the meantime, those who had escaped by water were unsuspicious of pursuit. Scarcely had the flotilla moored in the little harbor of Skenesborough before the enemy swept round the point since known as the "elbow," and commenced a furious attack upon the galleys. Two of them were captured, the remaining three were blown up. Aware of their utter inability to resist the overpowering force of Burgoyne, the Americans fired the batteaux, mills, and blockhouses, and fled towards Fort Edward, where Schuyler was encamped. Had their retreat been less precipitate, it is quite probable they would have fallen into the enemy's hands. A short distance below Skenesborough, South Bay stretches away from the main channel of the Lake, in a southerly direction, almost parallel with the course of Wood Creek; from which it is only separated by a narrow range of mountains. Anticipating the flight from Skenesborough, as it actually ensued, Burgoyne, upon the suggestion of a tory familiar

commission, and on the 5th of June was ordered to the command of Ticonderoga, which he assumed on the 12th of the same month. In 1781 he was directed to remain with the Pennsylvania line at Philadelphia, for the protection of Congress. He resided in Pennsylvania after the peace, was elected to Congress in 1786, and was president of that body in 1787. In 1788 he was appointed Governor of the Northwest Territory, which office he held until 1802. His military operations against the Indians in his territory were disastrous, and he retired from office ruined in fortune. He applied without success to Congress for the payment of certain claims, and finally died, almost pennyless, at Laurel Hill, near Philadelphia, August 31st, 1818, aged 84 years.—*Lossing.*

with the situation of this part of the country, dispatched a considerable force up the bay, with orders to cross the mountain in hot haste, so as to reach Wood Creek, and the road along its shore leading to Fort Edward, in advance of the retreating patriots. The latter, however, passed, just as the enemy ascended the summit of the range, and before the descent of its eastern declivity could be accomplished were beyond the reach of pursuit.

Thus, both on land and lake the British were victorious. At all points the friends of liberty were routed and dispersed. Driven from their strong hold, conquered on the field of Hubbardton, overwhelmed in the harbor of Skenesborough, stripped of ammunition and stores, and of more than a hundred pieces of artillery, they were now flying from the burning dwellings to which their own hands had applied the torch, to seek refuge behind the walls of distant fortresses, or amidst the solitary places of the wilderness. Thus far, Burgoyne had accomplished all he had so confidently foretold in his pompous proclamations. Flushed with success, and confident of continued victory, he resolved to rest awhile at Skenesborough, the halting-place of armies in other days, in order to re-assemble and refresh his troops, previous to plunging into the thick forest which it was necessary to penetrate before he could descend into the valley of the Hudson.

CHAPTER V.

Disastrous intelligence—Fugitives arrive at Fort Edward—John McCrea volunteers—Secluded life of Jane—Her visit to Argyle—Mrs. McNiel's family pride—Jane's suspense, on hearing of battle of Hubbardton—The mysterious boatman—Freel arrives with a letter—Its contents—State of the country around Fort Edward—Gloom and disaffection—General Phillip Schuyler—Sketch of his life—His devoted patriotism—He obstructs the roads and streams—John McCrea's arduous labors—Entertains feelings different from his sister's.

THE disastrous intelligence of the defeat of the Americans spread over the country, as if borne on the wings of the wind. In the evening of the 6th of July, the sad tidings reached Fort Edward of the loss at Skenesborough. The next day straggling bands of fugitives arrived, bringing the additional intelligence of the defeat at Hubbardton. With the patriots who gathered from all quarters, at Fort Edward, to listen to an account of the late incidents, which the fugitives were ready to repeat with garrulous exaggeration, came John McCrea. Upon no one, of all the sorrowing sons of liberty there assembled, did the calamitous news produce a more disheartening effect. Loud and bitter were his denunciations of those, whom he characterized as the

"accursed tories," who had volunteered to act as the pioneers of an invader who had come to trample on the freedom of the people. He was not one of those, who, although well affected, "discovered more inclination to take care of themselves than to join the army;" but, on the contrary, when Schuyler called upon the militia to take the field, he was among the foremost to obey the summons. He exerted his influence to the utmost to induce others to follow his example, and succeeded in arousing a spirit of resistance in the bosoms of many who were inclined to falter, in that dark hour of the Revolution.

During the preceding spring and winter, Jane had mused away the time on the banks of the Hudson. It may well be supposed that she listened with eagerness to every breath of rumor that came from the armies of the north. The occasional messages she privately received from young Jones, kept her advised of his movements. The reception of these affectionate missives were looked forward to with impatience, and served to vary the monotony of her secluded life. Her attachment to the young soldier was devoted; and, absorbed in more gentle contemplation, she gave but little heed to the stormy questions of the times. She only desired that the tempest might pass away; and in her daily supplications, not only invoked the Almighty to protect the being whose welfare was so closely connected with her own, but, to hasten the day, when "nation

shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

At intervals she was accustomed to pay a visit to her old friend, Mrs. McNiel, and her daughter, Miss Hunter, and on one occasion, in company with the latter, during this period, made a journey of several miles, on horseback, to the residence of Mr. Gilmur, in the adjoining township of Argyle. So slight an incident would have escaped altogether the observation of history, were it not that an aged and venerable man, but lately gathered to his fathers, was wont to tell, while afterwards speaking of the fate of Jenny, how he met the maidens on the way, and how their laugh rang merrily through the air, as they galloped past him along the winding path of the forest.

Mrs. McNiel was friendly to the royal cause, and awaited with some degree of anxiety the arrival of the British army, anticipating a pleasant meeting with her kinsman, General Fraser. The encomiums she bestowed upon that brave and accomplished officer were flattering in the extreme. Perhaps something of family pride dwelt in the bosom of the portly matron; indeed, as she discoursed of his deserts, her auditors were more than likely to learn that in her own veins there ran the blood of the Frasers. Jenny always gave an attentive ear to these dissertations, even when the voluble lady traced back the ancestral line to the very root of her genealogical tree; for aught connected with her

lover, even the history of the man under whose more immediate orders he was then serving, possessed a peculiar interest. From these visits she would return to her brother's house, undisturbed by those alarming apprehensions entertained by many of her neighbors. Instead of contemplating Burgoyne's advance with emotions of horror, she regarded his approach as an event that would relieve her from disagreeable suspense, and restore to her side him towards whom her heart had yearned long and lovingly.

The unexpected and startling intelligence, however, of the evacuation of Ticonderoga, and of the subsequent ill fortune of her countrymen, produced an excitement in her mind as violent as that which agitated her brother's, though of a different nature. A bloody battle had been fought, in which the field of encounter had been strewn with the bodies of the slain; she knew furthermore, from the fact that Fraser began the attack, that David Jones must have mingled in the strife; and for a time she knew not whether he was numbered among the living or the dead.

Gen. St. Clair, after the battle of Hubbardton, in order to avoid the division of the British army which, he was informed, was ascending to the North River, changed his route, and directed his march to Rutland. After halting two days, during which time he fell in with many soldiers who had escaped from the recent battle, he proceeded southward to

the village of Manchester, where he was joined by Warner, with about ninety men. From this place he marched towards Fort Edward, at which point he met General Schuyler on the 12th of July.

It was the day after the arrival of St. Clair, while Jane, as was her "custom always of an afternoon," was indulging a lonely ramble along the margin of the river, that she descried in the distance the approach of a small boat, containing but a single occupant. She watched its progress with attention, not failing to notice that it kept close to the eastern shore, sometimes even lost to sight beneath the overhanging branches of the trees. That the solitary rower, whoever he might be, desired to avoid observation, was evident. In order to gratify a curiosity now somewhat excited, she stepped into a cluster of bushes that entirely concealed herself, and at the same time afforded her a broad view of the river. Suddenly, the boat changed the direction of its course, and pointing its bow westward, shot right athwart the stream. The light shell, driven by a sturdy force, seemed almost to fly along the surface of the water; and as it gracefully glided round a point into a little cove, near the spot where Jane was standing, she discovered in the strange oarsman, the well-known form of Alexander Freel.

Anticipating at once the object of his errand, she stepped hastily forth from the place of her concealment, and presented herself before him. After an interchange of salutations, Freel handed her a

letter, and re-entering his boat, retraced his course with the same cautiousness he had previously maintained. The girl gazed a moment at the familiar superscription, then breaking the seal, and unfolding it with hurried fingers, read as follows:

"SKENESBORO', July 11th, 1777.

"DEAR FRIEND:

"I have ye opportunity to send you this by William Bamsy, hoping through Freel it will come safe to hand. Since last writing, Ty has been taken, and we have had a battle, which no doubt you have been informed of before this. Through God's mercy I escaped destruction, and am now well at this place, for which thanks be to Him. The rebels cannot recover from the blow yt has been struck, and no doubt the war will now end soon. Such should be the prayer of all of us. Dear Jenny, I do not forget you, though much there is to distract in these days, and hope I am remembered by you as formerly. In a few days we will march to Ft Edward, for which I am anxious, where I shall have the happiness to meet you, after long absence. I hear from Isaac Vaughn who has just come in that the people on the river are moving to Albany. I hope if your brother John goes, you will not go with him, but stay at Mrs. McNiels, to whom and Miss Hunter* give my dutiful respects. There I will join you. My dear Jenny, these are sad times, but I think

* Miss Hunter was the granddaughter of Mrs. McNiel, and cousin of Jenny, and at this time resided with the former. Miss Hunter afterwards married a Mr. Tierce. Her granddaughter is yet living at Fort Edward, the wife of a highly influential gentleman of that village, from whom this statement was received. His mansion stands upon the same lot formerly occupied by Mrs. McNiel's.

the war will end this year, as the rebels cannot hold out, and will see their error. By the blessing of Providence I trust we shall yet pass many years together in peace. Shall write on every occasion that offers and hope to find you at Mrs. Mc. No more at present:—but believe me yours aff'tly till death.

DAVID JONES."

Jane devoured this epistle with avidity, reperusing many times those sentences which assured her of the continuance of his constancy, and of his ardent anticipation of happiness in years to come. At length, carefully concealing it in her dress, she walked thoughtfully homewards, elated with a knowledge of his welfare, and relieved of a suspense which was becoming oppressive in the extreme.

The country around Fort Edward at this time, was the scene of bustle and excitement. The sole absorbing topic of conversation was Burgoyne's approach. There was hastening to and fro among the settlements, every man making eager inquiries, or giving utterance to expressions of alarm. It was now the season of harvest, but the ripe grain was neglected and ungathered; the reaper had thrown aside the sickle for the sword; the ox that toiled in the field, and the flocks that filled the pastures, were driven to remote and distant places, in order that they might not fall into the hands of the despoilers of the land. Language is inadequate to con-

vey a full description of the wretched condition of the Americans at this period. The little army at Fort Edward were in want of food and clothing, ammunition and artillery. The Eastern militia, dispirited by late disasters, were returning to their homes, and in the depth of their despondency, indications of insubordination were manifest. The forces of a victorious enemy lay almost within hearing of their evening guns, and the most stout-hearted scarcely dared indulge the hope of successfully resisting an array which had scattered all before it as it swept triumphantly through the Lake.

It is even probable that Fort Edward would have been then deserted, and no impediment thrown in the progress of Burgoyne in his march thither, had it not been for the unbending spirit and devoted patriotism of a man who, although wronged and neglected in his time, has since been rewarded with the grateful plaudits of posterity.* General Schuy-

* General Philip Schuyler was born at Albany, November 22d, 1733. His grandfather, Peter Schuyler, was Mayor of Albany, and commander of the Northern Militia in 1690. His father, John Schuyler, married Cornelia Van Courtlandt, a woman of strong mind; and Philip was their eldest son. By virtue of the law of primogeniture, he inherited the real estate of his father at his death, but, notwithstanding, generously shared it with his brothers and sisters. His father died while he was young, and to the thorough training of a gifted mother he was greatly indebted for his success in life. He entered the army against the French and Indians, in 1755, and commanded a company which attended Sir William Johnson to Fort Edward and Lake George. Attracting the attention of Lord Howe, he was placed in the commissariat de-

ler had left Albany for Ticonderoga, and met the news of the evacuation of the latter place, at Stillwater. Pushing forward, he received, at Schuylerville, the same day, the information of the defeat at Hubbardton, and loss of stores at Skenesborough.* As he advanced, the wildest apprehensions and

partment. To him also was intrusted the duty of conveying the body of that young nobleman to Albany for sepulture, after his fall at Ticonderoga. After the peace of 1763, he was a member of the Colonial Assembly of New York, and warmly opposed the British government in their attempts to tax the colonies. He was a member of the Continental Congress that assembled in 1775, and in June following was appointed by that body one of the major-generals of the American army. He was charged by Washington with the command in the province of New York, and directed to secure the Lakes, and prepare for invading Canada. Taking sick, the command devolved on Montgomery. During 1776, he was active in Indian affairs, and in perfecting the order and discipline of the Northern army. For causes quite inexplicable, he was superseded, in effect, by Gates, in March, 1777, but reinstated in May. Again, when prudence caused him to retreat down the Hudson, calumny which had successfully poisoned the minds of the Eastern people and militia, became so clamorous for his removal, that Congress placed Gates again in charge of the army, in August. Injured and insulted, the patriot still continued to devote his services and his fortune in aid of his country. He demanded a court of inquiry; and its verdict acquitting him of all blame, conferred as much honor upon him as his successor won at Saratoga. He was urged by Washington to accept military command, but he preferred to lend his aid to his country in another way. He was a member of the old Congress under the Confederation; and, after the adoption of the Constitution, was a senator from New York with Rufus King. He was again senator in 1797, in place of Aaron Burr. He died at Albany, November 18th, 1804, aged 71 years.—*Lossing.*

* Marshall.

murmurings of disaffection met him at every step. In this gloomy state of things, no officer could have exerted more diligence and skill than he displayed. Critical and discouraging as his position was, the stout heart of the patriot did not fail. Writing to the committee at Albany he said, "Should it be asked what line of conduct I mean to hold amid this variety of difficulties and distress, I would answer; *to dispute every inch of ground with General Burgoyne, and retard his descent into the country as long as possible.*"

Accordingly, while the British commander halted at Skenesborough, himself the guest of Philip Skene, whose knowledge of the country and people, as well as his well-known opposition to the patriots, caused him to be introduced into the military family of the chief, Schuyler exerted his utmost energies to impede the progress of the royal army. Woodcreek was navigable for batteaux from the falls of Skenesborough to Fort Ann: though at present it flows through a succession of meadows, forming a rich and romantic valley, at that time it ran among almost impenetrable marshes, covered with a thick growth of forest trees. From Fort Ann to Fort Edward, a distance of some dozen miles, known in the time of the old colonial wars, as "the Great Carrying Place," the surface of the country was rough, and rendered nearly impassable by reason of similar difficulties, and the moist and clayey nature of the soil. Through this uninviting region it was ne-

cessary for the army of Burgoyne to pass, before emerging into the more open country along the Hudson, where, he confidently anticipated, but slight and unavailing obstacles could be opposed to a successful conjuncture with the forces under Howe.

General Schuyler, without delay, during Burgoyne's halt at Skenesborough, endeavored to interrupt the passage of Woodcreek with all manner of obstacles. He "neglected no means of adding, by art, to the difficulties with which nature seemed to have purposely interdicted this passage. Trenches were opened, the paths obstructed, the bridges broken up, and, in the only practicable defiles, immense trees were cut in such a manner, on both sides of the road, as to fall across and lengthwise, which, with their branches interwoven, presented an insurmountable barrier; in a word, this wilderness, of itself so horrible, was thus rendered almost absolutely impenetrable. Nor did the American general rest satisfied with these precautions; he directed the cattle to be removed to the most distant places, and the stores and baggage from Fort George to Fort Edward, that articles of such necessity for his troops might not fall into the power of the enemy."*

In these arduous labors John McCrea participated as a volunteer. Responding to the call of his country, and prompted by noble and patriotic im-

* Botta, i., 459.

pulses, he freely forsook his family and his fields, giving to the cause of liberty, many days of unceasing and laborious toil.

This wilderness, of less than a dozen leagues in extent, now only separated David Jones from his betrothed. While John McCrea would rather that the bones of the young lieutenant should bleach within its dank recesses, than that he and his companions should ever pass it, there was a thoughtful maiden in his house, who, were it in her power, would have smoothed a pathway through it with her own hands, if it would have led him safely to her side. Such were the diverse emotions entertained by members of the same household, in "the days that tried men's souls."

CHAPTER VI.

THE March through the wilderness—Obstructions in Woodcreek—The Naturalist, Kalm—The battle of Fort Ann—The Expedition to Bennington—Sketch of Philip Skene—Burgoyne's confidence in his representations—Restlessness of the Indians—Their excesses—Their appearance in the neighborhood of Fort Edward—The Alarm—Flight of the Patriots to Albany—Jenny hesitates to accompany her brother—The Earl of Harrington—Nephew of Lieutenant Jones—Alexander Freel—Contest between duty and affection—Love triumphs.

TOWARDS the middle of July the royal army quitted Skenesborough. With much labor Burgoyne had succeeded in transferring batteaux from the Lake to Woodcreek. They had advanced up that stream, however, but a short distance, when they began to encounter obstacles they had not anticipated. Immense logs spanned the narrow channel, in many places diverting the natural course of the current and overflowing the adjacent lands. The march was slow and toilsome in the extreme, and, in addition to the severe labor the removal of these obstructions necessarily demanded, they were subjected to further annoyances of a most painful and tormenting character. Besides the difficulty of

obtaining supplies, they were literally devoured by swarms of insects, which the hot July weather had engendered in the surrounding swamps. The naturalist, Kalm, who passed through the same region some years previous, in his narrative dwells upon the annoyance he also experienced from them. After speaking of the oppressive heat, so intense as to forbid exercise in the middle of the day, for he also performed the journey in the midst of summer, he says:

"Punchins, as the Dutch call them, are the little gnats which abound here. They are very minute, and their wings gray, with black spots. They are ten times worse than the larger ones, or muskitoes; for their size renders them next to imperceptible; they are everywhere, careless of their lives, suck their fill of blood, and cause a burning pain."

At length, overcome with heat and hunger, and worn out with excessive labor, the troops arrived at Fort Ann. It was here that a severe battle occurred between the ninth British regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Hill, and a detachment of Americans under Colonel Long. When the latter abandoned the batteaux at Skenesborough in his flight from Ticonderoga, he hurried forward, as has been stated, and evading his pursuers who sought to intercept him by crossing the mountain from South Bay, halted at this ancient post. Here he received instructions from the south to maintain his ground. Informed of the approach of Colonel Hill, without

awaiting an attack, he gallantly sallied out to meet him. A short distance north of the Fort the opposite uplands approach each other so closely as to leave but little more than sufficient space for the passage of Woodcreek. In this narrow defile, which art has since widened to a considerable extent, the combatants met. "At half-past ten o'clock in the morning," Major Forbes, a British officer, testified on the trial of Burgoyne, "they attacked us in front with a heavy and well-directed fire; a large body of them passed the creek on the left, and fired from a thick wood across the creek on the left flank of the regiment; they then began to recross and attack us in the rear; we then found it necessary to change our ground, to prevent the regiment being surrounded; we took post on a high hill on our right. As soon as we had taken post, the Americans made a very vigorous attack, which continued upwards of two hours; and they certainly would have forced us, had it not been for some Indians that arrived and gave the war-whoop, which we answered with three cheers; the rebels soon after gave way."

They gave way, however, not in consequence of the Indian war-whoop, as Major Forbes erroneously supposed, but in consequence of a failure of ammunition. Had the Americans been well supplied in this respect, there is little room to doubt, they would have obtained a signal triumph. Their ammunition exhausted, they were compelled to retire; not, however, until they had set fire to Fort Ann, and left,

on the field of battle, more dead and dying enemies than history has recorded; most of whom were veterans, who had grown old in wars.

Distant from Fort Edward, by the most circuitous route, less than a score of miles, Burgoyne continued to press forward without delay. In this famous march he was compelled to build more than forty bridges, and to construct log roads for long distances; the remains of which are yet visible. Besides dragging artillery, &c., the soldier had to bear a heavy burden upon his back. This consisted, in Burgoyne's own words, "of a knapsack, containing his bodily necessaries, a blanket, a haversack with provisions, a canteen, a hatchet, and a fifth share of the general camp equipage belonging to his tent." These articles, added to his accouterments, arms and ammunition, it has been estimated, would weigh about sixty pounds. In consequence of the delays these obstacles unexpectedly created, the troops began to find themselves sadly in want of provisions. "Though our troops had toiled without intermission, during whole weeks," said one who was with the army at this time, "there was on hand no greater stock of provisions than promised to suffice for four days' consumption. I have called it a desert country," he continues, "not only with reference to its natural sterility—and, Heaven knows! it was sterile enough—but because of the pains which were taken, and unfortunately with too great success, to sweep its few cultivated spots of all articles likely to bene-

fit the invaders. In doing this the enemy showed no clemency either to friend or foe. All the fields of standing corn were laid waste, the cattle were driven away, and every particle of grain, as well as morsel of grass, carefully removed."*

It was while entangled in this wilderness, and pressed for necessary supplies, that Burgoyne determined upon the expedition to Bennington. It had been suggested and strongly recommended by Phillip Skene,† while the former and his staff were enter-

* Glich.

† About the close of the French and Indian War, Phillip Skene, an English Major under half pay, purchased several soldiers' grants, which he located at Skenesborough, now Whitehall. In order to secure his title, he obtained a royal patent. At this point he effected a small settlement, which was known as Skenesborough, until after the Revolution. He accompanied the expedition to Martinique and Havana, in 1761. He was the owner of a considerable number of slaves; was a magistrate of the crown; and was sometimes honored with the title of Governor, from the fact of his having held the office of Lieutenant Governor of Crown Point and Ticonderoga. Besides a substantial residence, he erected an edifice of stone, one hundred and thirty feet long, designed for a military garrison and depot. When Ethan Allen was at Castleton, on his way to surprise Ticonderoga, in 1775, he dispatched Captain Herrick with thirty men, to Skenesborough. In obedience to instructions, they captured the son of the proprietor, while out shooting. They also secured twelve slaves and fifty tenants, and took possession of his buildings. In the cellar of the house, they found the body of Phillip Skene's wife; where it had been preserved for a number of years, in order to secure an annuity devised to her "while she remained above ground." The body was buried, by the Americans, at the base of the mountain still known as Skene's mountain; and, seizing his schooner, they sailed down the lake to

tained in his fort-like mansion, at Skenesborough. The object of this expedition, so disastrous in its consequences to the British cause, was the capture of a large quantity of stores said to be collected in the vicinity of Bennington. It was represented by Skene that a majority of the people were opposed to rebellion, as he was pleased to term it, and ready to make it manifest, the first favorable opportunity. He expressed his assurance that "the friends of the British cause were as five to one; and that they wanted only the appearance of a protecting power to show themselves."* That Burgoyne reposed the utmost

join Allen. He advised the expedition to Bennington, and accompanied the enemy thither. Personally known to many Americans in the engagement there, to whom he was most obnoxious, great efforts were made to capture him. Four horses were shot under him, and the fifth expired, after carrying him beyond danger. He was at Saratoga when Burgoyne surrendered. When the latter proposed on the 13th Oct. to retreat, he turned to Skene, and, referring to the expedition to Bennington, reproachfully said, "You have brought me into this difficulty, now advise me how to get out of it." Skene replied, "Scatter your baggage and stores at proper distances, and the militia will be so engaged in collecting them, that you can get off." He had no doubt seen Gates's order issued, the day before, and directed to his own men, wherein he speaks of certain "scandalous transactions committed by persons who sought more after plunder than the honor of doing their duty." He ordered his buildings at Skenesborough to be burned, and went to England. His lands, consisting of over 25,000 acres, were confiscated. The officers captured at Saratoga signed a parole of honor, at Cambridge, Mass. His signature was the last, and, with the appendix, reads as follows: "Phillip Skene, a poor follower of the British Army."

* Gordon, ii., 242.

confidence in these representations, notwithstanding the opposition of both Reidesel and Phillips, is evident from the tone of his instructions to the commander of the expedition, dated the 9th of August. These instructions required Lieutenant Colonel Baume, with only six hundred Hessians, Canadians, Tories, and Indians, to "scour the country," to make prisoners of all "officers, civil and military, acting under Congress," to "tax the towns," and to bring in such vast supplies of cattle, horses, carriages, and provisions, "by the great road to Albany," that Thatcher was constrained to say, in his Journal, at the time, "Why, this redoubtable commander must surely be one of the happiest men of the age, to imagine such prodigious achievements are at his command; that such invaluable resources are within his grasp."* It being our design only to dwell with particularity upon the toils, privations, and adventures of those with whom David Jones was immediately associated, and inasmuch as he did not join the expedition to Bennington, we shall not here enter upon a description of its unsuccessful termination.†

During the wearisome period that Burgoyne's army was buried in those forests, which stretched southwardly from the head of Champlain to the waters of the Hudson, he began to realize the effects of that wicked policy which induced the ministry to engage the services of savages. Notwithstanding

* Military Journal, p. 92.

† See Appendix, A.

the severe restrictions he had imposed upon them, and the fair promises of obedience Le Loup had made in behalf of all the tribes, at the grand council and war-feasts on the banks of the Boquet, he found it utterly impossible to subject them to discipline, or control them within any reasonable limits. Impatient of restraint, they continually rambled from the main body of the army, small parties of them threading the woods in various directions, and spreading dismay and death wherever they appeared among the settlements. Patriot and tory were alike the victims of their vengeance, and even Burgoyne's written protection was almost uniformly disregarded. These cruelties tended to weaken the sense of security that many friends of the invaders had been led to entertain, and frequently royalists and republicans were compelled to fly before the tomahawks of these fierce marauders. They seemed to burn with an innate thirst for blood, and to consider it a more glorious achievement to scalp an enemy than to bring him a prisoner to camp. In the earlier part of the campaign, the royal officers, notwithstanding Burgoyne's emphatic assurance that they should "account for scalps," were inclined to overlook their barbarian excesses. "It is a conquered country, and we must wink at these things," said General Fraser on one occasion, when a band of terrified loyalists hurried to him with an account of the massacre of a whole family;* a remark which detracted

* Allen's family, of Argyle.

much from the fair reputation of that unfortunate general. Indeed, we have the authority of Burgoyne himself for saying, that after the murder of Miss McCrea, in consequence of his positive and absolute orders to the Indians not to molest those having his protection, many of them became so dissatisfied that they deserted him, returning to their hunting grounds by the rivers of Canada.*

In the latter part of July, small parties of savages were often observed prowling in the neighborhood of Fort Edward. These suspicious indications, together with the knowledge of the proximity of Burgoyne, not only caused the American forces to retire to Moses Kill, leaving a small party in the fort, but also induced the patriot families along the river to make preparations for flight towards Albany. It has been said, that "it is impossible to describe the appalling distress that many families experienced at that period of peril and alarm."† The roads were filled with fugitives; men leading little children by the hand, women pressing their infant offspring to their bosoms, hurrying forward in utmost consternation, from the scene of danger. Occasionally passed a cavalcade, two and even three mounted on a single steed, panting under its heavy load; sometimes carrying a mother and her child, while the father ran breathless by the horse's side. Then came a procession of carts drawn by oxen, laden

* State of the Expedition. † Neilson, p. 64.

with furniture hastily collected; and here and there, mingling with the crowd of vehicles, was seen many a sturdy husbandman followed by his household and driving his domestic animals before him. All was confusion and excitement; for, in the panic the alarm at first created, they "did not stand upon the order of their going, but went at once." The scene, as it has been often described, reminds one of the poetical description of the flight along the Tiber, towards the gates of Rome, when

> "aged folk on crutches,
> And women great with child,
> And mothers sobbing over babes
> That clung to them and smiled.
> * * * * *
> And droves of mules and asses,
> Laden with skins of wine,
> And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
> And endless herds of kine,
> And endless trains of waggons,
> That creaked beneath their weight,
> Of cornsacks and of household goods,
> Choked every roaring gate."

John Mc Crea, upon whom the military title of colonel had been conferred a short time previous by the committee of safety, apprehensive for the welfare of his family, had also made preparations to remove to Albany. Various causes interposed to prevent his carrying his design into execution as soon as he desired, but the principal one was, the reluctance which Jane exhibited to accompany him.

The inveterate hostility he had by this time conceived towards all the brothers Jones, rendered it necessary for her, in order to accomplish successfully the object she desired and the plan she had adopted, to conceal from him the cause of her hesitation. It was represented by the Earl of Harrington, during the trial of Burgoyne, that Lieutenant Jones denied having had any correspondence with Jenny immediately previous to her murder. It was the policy of Burgoyne and his adherents and defenders, to acquit themselves, and all connected with them, as far as possible, from any participation in the atrocious act. That the Earl of Harrington has been either incorrectly reported, or was singularly mistaken, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. David Jones was a man as much distinguished for his truthfulness as for his misfortunes. The character he sustained throughout his vivacious youth and melancholy manhood, forbids the idea that he would make an assertion on one occasion and deny it on another. That his correspondence at this time with Jenny was frequent, we have his own subsequent, uniform testimony.*

* On the 5th of September, 1853, we had the pleasure of an interview with the son of Daniel Jones, nephew of the Lieutenant, at Fort Edward. He is a highly intelligent and influential gentleman, a citizen of Brockville, Canada. To that place, or in its vicinity, his father, and his uncles Solomon and David, removed after the battle of Saratoga. From their lips he had heard the story of the massacre of Jane Mc Crea, as also from those of Mrs. Colonel Carley, of Brockville, formerly Miss Thompson, the com-

It was this correspondence, through which she was informed of the proximity of her lover, and of all his movements and intentions, that created in her bosom a desire to still linger at Fort Edward, notwithstanding the repeated solicitations of her brother, urging her to depart. The medium of communication was Alexander Freel. We regret that we have been unable, after much inquiry, to learn more of the history of this personage. From all we can ascertain, we are led to the conclusion that he was a man occupying an inferior position, one of those who were able to adapt themselves successfully to any party, as circumstances or interest required. It is probable he was one of the family of Peter Freel, who resided in the house since known as the "Baldwin House," close under the walls of the Fort. At any rate, it is known that Alexander and Jenny had a lengthened interview at this house, the day previous to her death. But little of the early life of Freel is now known; and a long-continued search among the records of the campaign, and extensive inquiries among aged people, and the descendants of those who must have known him well, have failed to elicit a single fact in regard to his subsequent fate. He parted from David and Solomon Jones at Moss Street, just at nightfall, on the evening of the

panion of Jenny, and who had passed the morning with her on the day of the tragedy. Upon information derived from this source, we rely as our authority, especially so far as the movements of Lieutenant Jones are concerned.

25th of July, and communicated to Jenny the message entrusted to him, the next day at Peter Freel's. From that time he seems to have vanished so suddenly from the observation of his contemporaries, that but faint and unsatisfactory traces of his after-life can be found. There is one person yet living who seems to retain a lingering recollection that such a man was slain in the battle of Stillwater; but it is so vague, uncertain, and undefined, as to render it altogether unreliable authority.

The peculiar circumstances in which Jenny was now placed, compelled her to adopt some decided course. On one hand, unconscious of her secret information, her brother was urgently importuning her to accompany her relatives to the south; on the other, the daily messages of her lover besought her to remain. The one portrayed in exaggerated language the appalling dangers that surrounded them; the other dwelt confidently on the absolute security to be found beneath the roof of Mrs. McNiel. In the heart of the maiden there was a contest between duty and affection. While it was raging, another affectionate and glowing epistle arrived, suggesting a scheme that would relieve them from the unhappiness of longer separation, and appealing to her to unite in it. It contained such an alluring and romantic proposition, and abounded with so many warm and endearing terms, that the confiding but distracted girl finally resolved to accede to it. It was Love's reinforcement, and decided the contest in his favor.

CHAPTER VII.

Relative position of the Belligerents—David and Solomon Jones at Moss Street—The old Military Road—The Fountain and the Pine—The Alternative—Jenny's visit to Fort Edward—Discloses her intention to Miss Thompson on the way—Subsequent history of the latter—Col. McCrea's anxiety for his sister's return—Twice sends a messenger for her—Her interview with Freel—Impossibility of Jones visiting Mrs. Mc Niel's—The implacable hatred of tories entertained by the patriots—The "true love" scheme—Jenny resolves to approach the British lines alone—The invisible attendants.

In order that the reader may more fully understand the various movements we are about to relate, and perceive the motives which actuated them, it seems necessary to present briefly, the relative positions of the belligerent parties and of those with whom we are more particularly concerned. The van of the British army had approached within about four miles of Fort Edward, and were encamped near Moss Street, in the present town of Kingsbury. Lieutenant Jones and his brother Solomon were there. The latter had a short time previously joined the royal army, and was then acting in the capacity of Assistant Surgeon. He afterwards became eminent in his profession, and for many years ranked with the most distinguished

medical practitioners in the Province of Upper Canada.

From the camp at Moss Street to the hamlet of Fort Edward, stretched the old military road, running east of the present highway between those points. It was a broad, well-beaten path, crossing a level and sandy table-land, until it reached the brow of the hill that descends abruptly to the left bank of the Hudson. Some half-way down the descent, a huge pine arose far above the height its species usually attains; and as it stretched forth its mighty arms over the tallest of its fellows, appeared like the patriarch of the forest pronouncing a silent benediction upon the trees beneath. Directly at its foot, gurgled up a never-failing spring. Here centered the deer paths in ancient days; and here the early settlers in the village were wont to fill their buckets, when the fiery sun of August had warmed the fountains in the plain below. For an hundred years this spot has been a place of resort. Once the traveler sought it only to slake his thirst, and rest afterwards in the shade of the giant that overshadowed it. In later years, strangers and pilgrims have flocked around it, drawn thither by a desire to behold the spot that witnessed the fearful and bloody massacre of Jane McCrea. The clear water of the spring still gushes up from its cool recesses in the earth, bounteously as of yore; but the patriarchal pine, so closely linked with romantic and melancholy associations, and so long the object of curious

regard, has fallen and disappeared. Not, however, until its aged limbs had become palsied and decayed, and the glorious green crown that had heretofore distinguished it, as monarch of the woods, had fallen at its roots.*

While the British van was at Moss Street awaiting the approach of Burgoyne, who was with the Hessians a short distance in rear, the main body of the Americans had abandoned the Fort, and, moving some five miles down the east bank of the river, had encamped at Moses Kill. About this period,

* In the summer of 1848, Mr. Lossing, while gathering materials for his entertaining, and we may add, incomparable work, entitled "The Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution," visited Fort Edward. Speaking of the "venerable and blasted pine," as he styled it, he says,—It "had exhibited unaccountable signs of decadence for several years, and when we visited it, it was sapless and bare. Its top was torn off by a November galé, and almost every breeze diminishes its size by scattering its decayed twigs. * * * The names of many ambitious visitors are intaglioed upon it, and reminded me of the line, 'Run, now, Orlando, carve on every tree.'" "In a few years," he adds, "this tree, around which history and romance have clustered so many associations, will crumble and pass away forever." We learn, however, that measures have been taken to preserve it from the destiny which Mr. Lossing very naturally predicted. During the winter of 1852-3, Mr. George Harvey, its owner, directed it to be cut down, and in order that it might not "pass away forever," has caused the sound portions of its vast trunk to be manufactured into elegantly wrought boxes, canes, &c. Specimens have been placed in the Crystal Palace, New York, and attract attention, as well in consequence of the interesting associations connected with them, as of the ingenious mechanism displayed by Mr. James M. Burdick, of Fort Ann, in their manufacture.

Arnold, who had been placed in command of one division of the forces in the north, had reached the army. The rear-guard, left in charge of the fortress, belonged to this division. On the summit of the eminence north of the pine tree, a picket guard was stationed under command of Lieutenant Van Vechten. Jenny was still remaining at her brother's house, a mile or two south of the camp at Moses Kill, on the opposite shore of the Hudson. So nearly had the opposing armies approached each other that the intervening space was the theater of daily skirmishes, between the American scouts and small parties of British and Indians. All the patriot families without exception, so far as can be learned, north of Moses Kill, had by this time forsaken their homes, and either taken refuge in the Fort, or joined in the general flight. Col. McCrea had made preparations for the removal of his household at the first signal of impending danger.

Such was the situation of parties and affairs on the day Jenny received from Lieutenant Jones the communication that fixed her resolution, as mentioned at the conclusion of the last chapter. After alluding to the warm and mutual attachment that had so long existed between them, and the unhappy separation the war had compelled them to endure, it proceeded to say, That in consequence of the violent animosity her brother had conceived towards himself and all his family—which he alleged was without just provocation, inasmuch as he had only

performed, as he conscientiously considered, his duty as a faithful subject, in joining the ranks of his lawful king—their marriage, in all probability, could never be consummated with the colonel's approbation. It was impossible to foretell the difficulties they might be destined to encounter, should they postpone the occasion that now offered itself of becoming at once indissolubly united. He therefore proposed that the marriage should take place on the following Sabbath. After the ceremony she could remain temporarily at Mrs. McNiel's, or join the officers' ladies who accompanied the army of Burgoyne. If she removed to Albany, he declared it to be a matter of uncertainty whether they would ever meet again. Situated as he was, compelled to hazard the chances of war, there was no divining how soon or late he might be taken away. His length of life did not depend upon the possession of youth and health, but upon the good fortune that might attend him, amidst the dangers with which he was surrounded.

On the other hand, should she choose to follow the fortunes of her brother, removing with him to some remote and perhaps unknown locality, it was likely that further communication would be interdicted, and that the step would finally result in an endless separation. Or, if ever he should succeed thereafter in reaching the secluded abode into which the rebellious obstinacy of John was certainly hurrying him, he would, doubtless, in the bitterness of his enmity, endeavor to drive him from her presence.

Should the proposal he suggested be declined, nothing but difficulties, disappointments, and unhappiness presented themselves on every side. If, therefore, she was not prepared to tear asunder all those endearing ties which so long had bound them fondly and affectionately together, he besought her, earnestly and passionately, for the sake of her own future peace, and for the honorable love he bore her, to listen with favor to the project he proposed.

It was a painful dilemma in which Jenny thus found herself unexpectedly placed. It devolved upon her to determine, and that without delay, which alternative she would choose. In either case, she foresaw that trouble and infelicity awaited her. Should she fly to the protection of her lover, she would forfeit the affection of one who, for years, had treated her with more than fraternal kindness; should she depart southward with her kindred, in all likelihood the anticipation which had been the long, sweet dream of her youth, would never be realized. At length, as has been stated, she yielded to the voice that was pleading in her heart, and, fixed in an unalterable resolution, returned a message to her betrothed, that unless unforeseen calamities prevented, she would meet him at the marriage altar on the day appointed.

In pursuance of this determination, on the 24th of July, she repaired to Fort Edward, in company with Miss Thompson, afterwards the wife of Colonel Carley. The ostensible object of this visit

was to bid farewell to Mrs. McNiel and her granddaughter, Miss Hunter,* both of whom, being staunch loyalists, of course did not design abandoning their homes. To carry her plan into successful execution, it was necessary that the colonel should remain ignorant of her intentions. On the way, however, she unfolded them to her confidant and companion, the only person, except David and Solomon Jones, who was acquainted with the secret.† Between Jenny and Miss Thompson, there seems to have existed the closest intimacy and the warmest friendship. The latter had resided some time in the family of Colonel McCrea, previous to the massacre of his sister. Soon after that event, she removed to Canada, where she formed the matrimonial alliance already mentioned. She lived to the age of more than threescore years, and during her life was noted for her superior intelligence and pleasing address. Many of her descendants now reside in the vicinity of Brockville, and through her were made familiar with the tragic story of her young friend, Jenny.

Colonel McCrea expected his sister would return the day following her departure. The sun, however, began to disappear in the west, twilight, and

* In a preceding chapter, Miss Hunter has been spoken of as Miss Campbell, and as the daughter of Mrs. McNiel. The information that led to the discovery of the mistake, was not received until after the chapter was in press.

† This information was lately obtained from David Jones, Esq., nephew of the lieutenant, who received it from Mrs. Carley herself.

finally darkness succeeded, and still she made not her appearance. The anxious brother waited and watched in vain. Early on the morning of the 26th, he dispatched a messenger to Mrs. McNiel's to conduct her immediately home. She framed excuses for delay, and sent back the messenger with the information that she would not return before the following Monday.

At this time the Indians were scouring the country in all directions. Burgoyne's arrival at the fort, was anticipated daily and hourly. Alarm everywhere prevailed. Among those who now looked for safety in flight, there was not a moment to be lost. The colonel only postponed the departure of his family in consequence of his sister's non-appearance, and was alarmed and troubled at her strange and unaccountable delay. He directed the messenger to return again, and this time required her, in most peremptory terms, to join him immediately. A large bateau was then being loaded near the fort, which, it was said, would proceed down the river next morning. Intimating her design of taking passage in this conveyance, the messenger was a second time dismissed.

About noon, the 26th of July, she was observed to leave Mrs. McNiel's, and direct her steps to the house of Peter Freel, situated within a few rods of the Fort. Here, in accordance with previous arrangement, she had an interview with Alexander. That morning there had been a spirited skirmish

between some British and Indians, and a party of Americans, near Moss street. Several of the latter were killed, and all who escaped now took refuge in the Fort. The out-posts and picket guard on the hill retired behind its walls, prepared to abandon it, and join the camp at Moses Kill, at any moment necessity demanded.

It was impossible for the marriage to take place at Mrs. McNiel's. Her house was within gun-shot of the fortress. For Jones to have appeared there, would have been the height of recklessness, and would have resulted in almost certain capture. He was well known to all, both old and young, in that vicinity; and with the patriots, the most virulent and implacable hatred of tories was a characteristic sentiment of the times. To have proceeded to Mrs. McNiel's house, for the purpose of conducting her himself to the British camp, would have been an act of inexcusable fool-hardiness. Such being the situation of things, a plan was adopted which, had it not been for an unforeseen and unlucky circumstance, would, in all probability, have been attended with success. It was first suggested to his brother by Solomon Jones, who, acceding to it, had sent Alexander Freel to ascertain from Jenny, among other things, whether it met with her approval. This was the matter she was listening to, and deliberating upon, in the mansion of her old acquaintance, Peter, while her brother was so anxiously

gazing up the river, and wondering at her inexplicable absence.

The proposition was that Jenny should depart from the residence of Mrs. McNiel, and approach the British lines, or, at least advance beyond the American out-posts, without any *visible* attendant. A woman, it was considered, apparently passing from one neighbor to another, it was not likely would meet with molestation; at least it was certain that no one would fire upon her, who might possibly meet her in the way or observe her from an ambush. Two miles from Fort Edward, on the road to the British camp, resided one William Griffin, a royalist who had a protection from Burgoyne. If she succeeded in reaching his house in safety, the remaining short distance could be passed without any apprehension of danger. In order, however, to be prepared for any unanticipated emergency, Lieutenant Jones proposed that a small party of Indians, not exceeding ten or twelve in number, should leave the camp on Sunday morning; steal cautiously through the defiles and thickest parts of the forest, avoiding any hostility that might tempt them, to a point within sight of Mrs. McNiel's house; that on displaying a preconcerted signal, Jenny should sally forth alone; and as she proceeded unattended along the road towards William Griffin's, the Indians were to keep pace with her as they returned through the adjacent woods—so near as not to lose sight of her, and so distant as to avoid observation.

Beyond the farthest out-post, her lover would advance to meet her, when, conducting her into camp, the chaplain of his regiment, Brudenell, would be in attendance to perform the marriage service.

The Indian employed in the accomplishment of this adventure, so far as to take charge of the party accompanying him, was one with whom the lieutenant was on friendly terms, growing out of favors he had shown him on numerous occasions during the progress of the march. It is rather the opinion of our informant, from a recollection of his uncle's description of him, that the blood of the white man was in his veins; at all events, he had been somewhat educated, and was prominent in his tribe. He bore the name of Duluth. In his prudence, intelligence, and integrity, Lieutenant Jones reposed unlimited confidence, and never after did he have reason to suppose it was misplaced.

A walk to William Griffin's, a feat she had a hundred times accomplished, was a slight matter in Jenny's estimation. The Americans, she knew, had that day sought shelter in the Fort. Should she encounter a straggling band of the enemy, the immediate presence of their allies, announcing her destination and the object of her errand, would secure her from harm. In fine, if Alexander Freel's assurances, as repeated to Jones, can be accredited, the poor girl laughed at the idea of personal danger, and characterizing it as "a true love scheme," adopted it with ready, and unhesitating alacrity.

Finally, every arrangement for the morrow having been made, and fully and minutely understood, the interview terminated,—Jenny retracing her steps to Mrs. M.'s,—the indefatigable go-between seeking the British camp by a circuitous path, to gladden the impatient heart of the lieutenant, and to claim his reward.

At this time, and ever since Jane's last arrival at Fort Edward, Miss Hunter had been absent on a visit to Mr. Gilmer's, within the limits of the present township of Argyle. Affrighted and appalled by the deed of horror just enacted in the neighborhood where she sojourned, as will presently appear, the evening of this day was passed by her, crouching fearfully in the darkest places of the woods, while her grandmother and Jenny, unconscious of events, sat calmly in the former's house, discoursing cheerfully. The venerable and portly lady discussed as usual, we presume, the military, civil, and social qualities of her cousin, General Fraser. We can imagine her less fluent companion seated by her side, occasionally lost in thoughtful contemplation as the next day's business pressed upon her mind, and how she sank to rest that night, resolving to arise with the morning sun—the last, in the mysterious providence of God, her young eyes were destined to behold!

CHAPTER VIII.

The murder of the Allen family—Miss Hunter and companions in the forest—Consternation of the inhabitants—Duluth sets out on his romantic errand—Preparations for the marriage—Jenny watches for the signal—Mrs. McNiel's account of the massacre—Her ignorance of the causes that led to it—Letter of James McCrea—Jenny discovers the sign—She sets forth alone to meet her lover—She meets Van Vechten's men retreating before Le Loup—Her flight back to the house—The capture—Mrs. McNiel carried into camp—Her meeting with Fraser—Duluth's interference—He claims the right to escort Jenny—The contention—The catastrophe.

About the hour that Jane McCrea arrived at the house of Peter Freel, that is to say, at noon on the 26th day of July, as has always, from certain indications, been supposed, the horrible tragedy was taking place in Argyle, that drove Miss Hunter and her friends, in utter consternation, to seek safety in the forests. The day before, Le Loup, with a troop of savages, had set out from camp on one of his usual excursions. In the course of their wanderings they came to the settlement of Mr. John Allen, in Argyle. He was the son-in-law of Mr. Gilmer, in whose house Mary Hunter was temporarily abiding. Both these men were loyalists, though neither of them was distinguished for any exhibition of

partisan warmth. Relying upon the protection Burgoyne had promised to all those who espoused the cause of the king, they remained comparatively "easy in their possessions." While their patriot neighbors fled, leaving the ripe grain to rot in the fields, they lingered behind to watch their flocks, and gather in the harvest. It has been said, however, that notwithstanding their political predilections, and the promise of Burgoyne's protection, they were not without serious apprehension of the savages, and that they had resolved to seek a more distant and secure abode, as soon as the season of harvest was passed. Some misinformed historians have asserted that John Allen was engaged in packing up his goods, and preparing to depart immediately to Albany, at the moment Le Loup and his band appeared. The fact is, he had passed the forenoon of that day laboring in his fields, and three slaves belonging to his father-in-law were present, and assisted him. A younger sister of Mrs. Allen had left her father's at a late hour in the morning, on an errand to her brother-in-law. Not returning when expected, Mr. Gilmer, towards nightfall, sent another colored lad belonging to him, to ascertain the cause of her detention. Presently he came running back, throwing up his arms wildly, and haggard with affright, screaming that young Missus and Massa Allen and all the family were dead! Forthwith repairing to Allen's residence, a scene of horror presented itself, that sickens the imagina-

tion, even at this distance of time, to contemplate. In the same room lay stretched upon the floor, nine ghastly and bloody corpses, all of which that morning had been full of life and health. They were the inanimate bodies of Mr. Allen, his wife, his sister-in-law, his three children, and the three slaves. Their scalps had been torn off; and their cold, staring eyeballs, stained with blood and half protruding from their sockets, too plainly showed the mortal fear they suffered at the moment of their deaths. Not one was left to relate the manner of the massacre—no eye but the Almighty's beheld the infernal butchers perform their horrid work. All appearances, however, indicated that the devoted family were seated unsuspectingly around the table, partaking of their noonday meal, when the savage ministers of death fell suddenly upon them. The table stood in its accustomed place, in the center of the room, and by certain tokens it was considered evident that they had risen from it in confusion, on the unexpected entrance of the murderers. The house had been ransacked and plundered, but the plunderers were gone. They had departed secretly and stealthily as they came. Not a sob or groan broke the awful stillness that prevailed. There lay the stiff and motionless corpses on the bloody floor, while silence, emphatically the silence of death, brooded over the scene. Dismayed, appalled, the horror-stricken kindred lingered not to perform the rites of burial; but, seized by an overmastering fear,

fled into the farthest solitudes of the wilderness, hoping to find that safety of which they were not assured while beneath the family roof. Their object was to make their way, unobserved, to the garrison of Fort Edward, and to this end, they crept from thicket to thicket through the long hours of the night, startled by the slightest sound that disturbed the gloomy silence of the woods. Fear fell upon the people, far and near, when the account of this and other similar horrors was spread abroad. The patriots at New Perth,* assembled nightly with their wives and children within the temporary fortification they had prepared, while the royalists flocked from all quarters to the English camp, uttering loud remonstrances and demanding the promised protection. It was to them that Fraser made the celebrated but unfeeling remark—"It is a conquered country, and we must wink at these things."

While Mary Hunter and her companions were still tremblingly seeking their way through the forest, the morning of the 27th of July broke forth brightly in the east. It was a clear, warm morning—the Sabbath of the Lord—and as the sun ascended towards the zenith, shedding its genial rays upon the earth, the bees hummed among the flowers, and the birds sang among the trees, and all the voices of nature, from field and flood and forest, seemed to have joined in a psalm of praise to their Creator. There was nothing on the earth, or in the

* Now Salem.

air, to give warning that danger was lurking near, or that further bloodshed was at hand.

At dawn, a small party of Americans, under Lieutenant Van Vechten, had issued from the Fort, and stationed themselves upon the brow of the hill north of the great pine. They were on the look-out for the advance guard of the British army, now constantly expected, and prepared, on its first approach, to convey the intelligence to their comrades in the rear.

In the meantime Duluth and his party had set out from the camp at Moss-street, after having received all necessary instructions and directions from the lieutenant. He was solemnly charged by the latter to avoid being seen by the enemy at the Fort, or any of his scouts, however far it might lead him from the ordinary path. If she was brought to him unharmed, his gratitude would be unbounded, and those who accompanied him should receive whatever reward his resources could command. With many and sincere assurances that no effort would be neglected to carry out his instructions faithfully, Duluth departed on his romantic errand. And David Jones, his rejoicing heart filled with pleasurable emotions, made ready for the reception of his bride. His brother Solomon, and several of his associate officers, to whom the affair had been communicated, took a lively interest in the proceedings.* It was a

* Burgoyne, in his "Statement of the Expedition," says that

bit of romance, well calculated to excite attention, especially among those who, quitting the social scenes of home, had been so long subjected to the monotony of military life. The professional services of the chaplain of the regiment were engaged; every necessary arrangement was made; and all were watching and waiting with ill-concerted impatience for the appearance of the maiden.

Duluth and his followers, on leaving the camp, struck off in a westerly direction towards the river. With true Indian cunning and precaution, they pursued their course, winding here and there as prudence dictated—creeping over dry and decayed branches, and through dense masses of underbrush, as noiselessly as cats; and finally, unobserved, reached the point to which they were directed to repair. It was between the spring and the river, and at a spot where a signal could be observed from Mrs. McNiel's mansion.

Jenny's eyes had been turned in that direction for hours. She had arrayed herself in her best attire, which she had brought with her from home in anticipation she would require its use, and with more than ordinary care had sought to arrange her long glossy tresses in a graceful and becoming manner. The extraordinary length and beauty of her hair have been described by all who knew her, as singular and remarkable. Mrs. McNiel afterwards

the fact of the engagement was well known among the officers of the army.

was often heard to say it was a yard and a quarter in length ;* and Mrs. Carley in her life time was accustomed to assert that she had seen her, on more than one occasion walk with it unconfined, and that it trailed upon the floor. It is probable she was not aware that Lieutenant Van Vechten's party had left the Fort, or if she was, it excited little if any apprehension. Miss Thompson was the only person in the village that day who had the least suspicion of her intended movement. Why she concealed it from Mrs. McNiel, as she undoubtedly did, we are unable to account. The old lady was fluent as well as pleasant in conversation, but how far she was capable of keeping a secret, we are not informed. If we were, perhaps a solution of the mystery might be presented. Had Miss Hunter been at home, she would unquestionably have been admitted to her confidence, and the facts above related would have been mentioned in her subsequent recitals of the story.

We come now to a point in our narrative where we are compelled to diverge from all the many versions which have been published of this affair. These, whatever different phases they may have assumed, are founded upon the relation originally given by Mrs. McNiel. She was, with the exception of the negro servant woman, the only person that knew the particulars of the capture in the house. Of course, so far as those particulars are in question

* Lossing, vol. i., page 99.

her evidence is indisputable. If we understand correctly the account of this transaction which is attributed to her, she did not witness the massacre at all, and was wholly unaware of it until she recognized Jenny's scalp, by the long hair attached to it, after her arrival in the British camp. Unconscious, as we have seen, of her young friend's intentions—ignorant of the movements of Duluth, and of the arrangements and expectations of David Jones, her knowledge of the circumstances and real causes which led to the disaster, was, in fact, no more than that of Albert Baker, or Samuel Standish, or any other person who witnessed from the Fort the sudden tumult at the house of Mrs. M., and saw the savages hurrying their captives up the neighboring ascent. All she knew was, that the Indians came rushing towards her dwelling; that in the alarm and fright the family sought to conceal themselves in the kitchen-cellar; that she was dragged forth, conducted rudely up the hill, stripped of most of her apparel, and in that plight carried into camp. Being thrown upon her face to avoid American bullets she heard so distinctly whistling above her head, is probably an embellishment of very modern origin. The particulars of the murder, and David Jones' connection with the transaction, she only heard as others did at the time. Jenny did not survive, as her lover was destined to, to reveal the truth to her friends and relatives; and therefore it is not to be wondered at that in her own family, forty-five years afterwards,

erroneous impressions in regard to the affair should be entertained, especially when it is remembered that David Jones, who could have enlightened them, left the country never to return.*

* The following correspondence was published in the Mohawk Herald at the time the communications bear date:

FLORIDA, Dec. 27, 1822.

DEAR SIR:—There was no event during our revolutionary struggle with Great Britain, that elicited more sympathy than the tragical fate of Miss McCrea. The time, and even the circumstances, attending that transaction, was peculiarly fitted to harrow up the minds of men to resistance and revenge. Wherever the story was told, and it was told throughout the Continent with the rapidity of lightning, every bosom was thrilled as by an electric shock, and beat in unison. Young as I then was, the horrors of that scene impressed my mind so deeply, that forty-six years have, in no part, effaced it. But the subsequent writers of that period of our history have related the story very differently, and some have spelled the name erroneously. In order to correct in season every mistake, I lately requested Col. McCrea, of Saratoga, to state all the facts, as they were known and believed in the family. This gentleman was nephew to Jane McCrea, and is distinguished for candor and probity; and is perhaps better able to tell the story than any other living witness. The following is an extract from his letter. I hope you will think, with me, that it ought to be preserved, and give it a place in the Herald. Yours, &c.,

S. REYNOLDS.

BALLSTON, July 1st, 1822.

SIR:—It is with no small degree of diffidence, I undertake to commit to paper that which is known in our family concerning the late Jane McCrea; and in yielding to this, I do it solely with the view of complying with your request, of transmitting to posterity something more of her history than is at present extant. Miss Jane McCrea, who was killed by the Indians, at Fort Edward, July, 1777, was the daughter of the Rev. James McCrea, formerly pastor of a congregation in Lamington, N. J., but died previous to the Revolution. His eldest son, Col. John McCrea, had become a resident of Albany, before his father's death, and his sister, Jane, directly afterwards, repaired to his house and settled with him. In the year '73 they removed to that part of this county now known by the name of Northumberland, on the west side of the Hudson

Now, the facts, as always related by the lieutenant and his brother Solomon, who, besides their own personal connection with and knowledge of the matter, are corroborated by the statements of Duluth and the important testimony of Mrs. Carley, are these. Jenny, having completed her toilet as already mentioned, was intently watching for the expected signal. Some accounts, prevalent at the time, insist that this signal was a letter from Jones, which the Indian held aloft in his hand. Whatever it was, she at length beheld it, and recognizing it as the sign agreed upon, silently and unnoticed left the house, and tripped along the path that led towards William Griffin's.

river, about three miles north of Fort Miller Falls, and was here when his sister was killed. This was on Sunday morning, and it was evening before he received the fatal news. Early the next day he sent his family to Albany, and repaired himself to the American Camp, where he found his sister's corpse, shockingly mangled. Two of the neighboring women, whom he had brought with him, washed and dressed her remains; and he had her interred with one Lieutenant Van Vechten, three miles south of Fort Edward. She was twenty years of age, of an amiable and virtuous character, and highly esteemed by all her acquaintances. She was at this time on a visit to a family near Fort Edward. A Mrs. McNiel had persuaded her to remain until the Monday following. Here she was concealed in the cellar when the Indians arrived, who, after ransacking the house, discovered her retreat and drew her out by the hair, and placing her on a horse, proceeded on the road towards Sandy Hill. They had gone but a short distance when they met another party of Indians, returning from Argyle, where they had killed the family of Mr. Barnes. This party disapproved of taking Miss McCrea to the British Camp, and one of them struck her with a tomahawk, and tore off her scalp. It was said, and generally believed, that she was engaged in marriage to Capt. David Jones, of the British army. Capt. Jones survived her only a few years.

I am, Sir,
Your most Ob't. Serv't.,
JAMES McCREA.

She was moving forward quietly and undisturbed, and had partly ascended the first rise of ground, when to her utter astonishment, and to the astonishment of Duluth and his party, who were watching her from their place of concealment, the discharge of musketry, followed by the terrible war-whoop, resounded through the air. The sudden and startling clamor proceeded from the heights above. Presently, the flying Americans were seen rushing down the hill directly towards her, followed, like bloodhounds, by screeching and painted savages. Turning about, as soon as the first moment of surprise was passed, she fled towards the house she had just left, with the speed of an affrighted fawn. The Americans precipitated themselves across the marsh that lay west of Mrs. M.'s, towards the Fort. Those who survived had now approached so near the latter, as to render further pursuit in that direction dangerous. Meanwhile, Jenny had been perceived, and some six or eight stalwart barbarians, changing their course, bounded after her, reaching the house in a few moments after her entrance. The inmates, consisting of the old lady, Jenny, two small children, and a black servant girl, hastily descended [redacted] the cellar. Mrs. McNiel, on account of her extreme corpulency, was somewhat tardy in her movements. Before she had fully accomplished the descent into the cellar, she was seized. Jenny was also dragged forth, while the children and colored girl remained unobserved. With their cap-

tives, and such plunder as could be hastily collected they hurried away in the direction of the camp. In consequence of their proximity to the Fort, not distant more than eighty rods, their own safety demanded the utmost expedition. Their stay in the house was of brief duration, not exceeding, perhaps, the length of time it has taken us to record the scene. Before the soldiers at the garrison could fully comprehend all that was transpiring before their eyes, the Indians were far beyond the reach of their muskets.

To understand this sudden attack upon Van Vechten's men, and the consequent capture of the ladies, it is necessary to go back a step in our narration. Le Loup and his band, after the merciless destruction of the Allen family in Argyle, the previous day, directed their course towards the camp at Kingsbury. They were loaded with plunder of various descriptions, and in the progress of their peregrinations had stolen a number of horses. The scalps of the murdered family dangled conspicuously from their war-belts. Prowling through the wilderness they had discovered Van Vechten's party, and, at the unfortunate moment of Jane's departure, had made the attack upon it. A number of the Americans were killed, among them Lieutenant Van Vechten. He fell just as his party began to descend the declivity, in its retreat. Had not Jane set out at that precise moment, or had she managed to have escaped observation, it is altogether probable the

Indians would not have ventured forward as far as Mrs. McNiel's residence. It was, undoubtedly, the sight of the girl flying thither, that first suggested the idea of their advancing to it.

Near the spring under the great pine, the road divided, the right-hand path leading past William Griffin's, the left running nearer the east bank of of the river. At this point they halted, and endeavored to place their captives upon a couple of the stolen horses. The attempt to lift Mrs. McNiel on the back of one of the animals, by reason of her exceeding gravity was unsuccessful. Signifying by signs the impossibility of her being able to ride, a brace of brawny savages seized her by the arms and hurried her up the right-hand path. On arriving at the height of land, they unceremoniously stripped off her outer garments, and in a half-denuded state conducted her into camp. Her meeting with General Fraser, her kinsman, was sooner than she expected, and under more embarrassing circumstances than she had anticipated. Instead of greeting him with her accustomed affability, her first salutation was a storm of reproaches. She demanded the cause of his sending his "scoundrel Indians" after her. General Fraser assured her he was guiltless of any intended disrespect, and expressed much astonishment at what had taken place. In fact, he supposed she was still residing in New York, and did not anticipate the pleasure of meeting her until his arrival in that city. Every pains was

taken by him to reconcile her, and render her situation as comfortable as circumstances would permit. He encountered a serious difficulty, however, in obtaining for her a suitable dress. The ladies in camp ransacked their baggage, but among the wardrobes of them all, there was not a gown of sufficiently vast dimensions to inclose her expansive figure. She was under the necessity, therefore, of using the general's camp coat for a garment, and his pocket handkerchief as a substitute for a cap.

When Mrs. McNiel was seized by the two Indians, at the junction of the roads near the Great Pine Tree, and hurried forward to the adjacent upland, Jane had been seated by her captors on one of the stolen horses. She never saw her afterwards. A terrible scene followed presently, but not till she had passed over the eminence, and was out of sight. Just as the old lady was led away, Duluth and his men, who had thus far been inactive but intent spectators of the whole proceeding, presented themselves before the party of Le Loup. Duluth, as he subsequently, and no doubt truly, reported to Lieutenant Jones in the hearing and presence of his brother Solomon, stated the relation in which he stood towards the captured maiden, and demanded, as a right, the privilege of escorting her into camp. He explained, in Indian dialect, the strong obligations he was under to protect her from harm or wrong. The captors, however, disregarded his demand; they declined to recognize his right. The

victim was within their grasp, bravely taken by their own hands, and as their covetous eyes surveyed the rich apparel wherewith she was adorned, loudly and decidedly refused to yield her up. It would have been well, under the circumstances, had Duluth refrained from further interference. It would have cost Jenny her bridal garments, but most probably have saved her life. In his anxiety, however, to fulfill his pledge, he did not stop to deliberate. Moreover, he afterwards declared, it did not occur to him, the girl's life was in danger. There was no object in taking it. Both parties were aware that friends were anxiously awaiting her approach, and that it was their interest to preserve her from personal injury. While they were thus contending, it was announced that a detachment which had issued from the fort was approaching them. Presently was heard a report of firearms, the whistling of bullets, and the shouts of an advancing force. There was no time for further parley. The horse upon which Jenny sat was urged forward. Duluth, regardless of the danger of delay, clutched at the bridle rein, determined she should proceed in his possession. Angry words were flung back and forth, and it was plain the savages would soon be battling among themselves. Provoked beyond control by the pertinacity of Duluth, the fierce Le Loup, in a boiling and sudden flood of passion, sprang like a maddened tiger towards the object of contention, and whirling his tomahawk with incon-

ceivable dexterity, buried its glittering blade deep within her side! As she fell to the ground, he wound her long hair round his accursed fingers, and in an instant, before a hand could be raised to stay him, was holding the bloody scalp aloft, and gazing at it with a look of ferocious and infernal triumph! His companions tore the dress from her lifeless body, which those who sought to protect her bore a short space aside and covered with brush, when the whole party hurried quickly forward,—Duluth to recount the awful scene to the horrified lieutenant; Le Loup to exhibit his trophies in the camp, and boast of them afterwards at the war dances of his tribe.

CHAPTER IX.

The Excitement—Correspondence between Gates and Burgoyne—The people aroused—Announcement of the murder in the British camp—Its effect on David Jones—Sketch of his subsequent life—The Jones family—The recent claim—Discovery of Jenny's body—Evacuation of Fort Edward—The hasty burial—Le Loup condemned to death—His pardon—Burgoyne reaches the Hudson—The defeat at Bennington—Sketch of Gen. Stark—Affairs in the Mohawk Valley—Battle of Oriskany—Retreat of St. Leger—The mystery explained—Burgoyne's march to the Battenkill—His passage of the Hudson—The first battle of Bemus Heights—Justice to Arnold—Second battle of Bemus Heights—Death of Gen. Fraser—Desperation of Arnold—The Americans victorious—Burial of Fraser—Burgoyne's retreat—The surrender at Saratoga—Jenny's remains exhumed—The re-interment at Fort Edward—The second exhumation—Their present resting-place—The epitaph.

THE account of this dreadful tragedy at once circulated far and wide over the land, and everywhere excited the liveliest emotions of sympathy. By every fireside, in public assemblies, in the national counsels, it was told and re-told, until the story of Jane McCrea was known throughout the continent. It was the subject of songs and ballads.* It crossed the Atlantic, and was caught up by those

* See Appendix, B.

who had opposed the war. In the House of Commons, while denouncing the ministry for having employed savages in the struggle against the Colonies, Burke repeated it with all the vehemence and power that characterized his glowing eloquence. It spread still farther, through France, Germany, Italy, and over all the nations of Europe that recognized the rules of civilized warfare; and the inhumanity of England in making allies of barbarians who could be guilty of such atrocious and cruel acts, was everywhere condemned. Among the patriots, the murder of the defenseless girl, excited emotions of unappeasable indignation. In the language of Mr. Reynolds, contained in his letter to James McCrea, which we have copied in a preceding note, it was indeed "peculiarly fitted to harrow up the minds of men to resistance and revenge." To fan the flame, and still more increase the excitement that prevailed, and which was daily bringing additional force to his standard, General Gates seized the first occasion that offered itself, to pen the letter to Burgoyne, which has been justly pronounced "more ornate than forcible, and abounding more in bad taste than simplicity and pathos, yet suited to the feelings of the moment."* It had, however, notwithstanding Burgoyne's spirited reply, the effect intended.†

* Sparks.

† The British general had complained of the harsh treatment experienced by the provincial prisoners taken at Bennington, and

How far this barbarity may have contributed to the final defeat of Burgoyne, and the maintenance

requested that a surgeon from his army should be permitted to visit the wounded; and that he might be allowed to furnish them with necessaries and attendants. "Duty and principle," he added, "make me a public enemy to the Americans who have taken up arms; but I seek to be a generous one; nor have I the shadow of resentment against any individual who does not induce it by acts derogatory to those maxims upon which all men of honor think alike." In answer to this letter, General Gates, who had just taken command of the American army, said, "That the savages of America should, in their warfare, mangle and scalp the unhappy prisoners who fall into their hands, is neither new nor extraordinary; but that the famous Lieutenant General Burgoyne, in whom the fine gentleman is united with the soldier and the scholar, should hire the savages of America to scalp Europeans, and the descendants of Europeans—nay more, that he should pay a price for every scalp so barbarously taken, is more than will be believed in Europe, until authenticated facts shall, in every gazette, confirm the truth of the horrid tale.

"Miss McCrea, a young lady lovely to the sight, of virtuous character and amiable disposition, engaged to an officer of your army, was, with other women and children, taken out of a house near Fort Edward, carried into the woods, and there scalped and mangled in a most shocking manner. Two parents, with their six children, were all treated with the same inhumanity, while quietly resting in their once happy and peaceful dwelling. The miserable fate of Miss McCrea was particularly aggravated, by being dressed to receive her promised husband; but met her murderer employed by you. Upwards of one hundred men, women and children, have perished by the hands of the ruffians to whom, it is asserted, you have paid the price of blood."

To this part of his letter, General Burgoyne replied,—"I have hesitated, sir, upon answering the other paragraphs of your letter. I disdain to justify myself against the rhapsodies of fiction and calumny, which from the first of this contest, it has been an unva-

of American Independence, is but matter of conjecture. Historians allude to it as one of the "power-

ried American policy to propagate, but which no longer imposes on the world. I am induced to deviate from this general rule, in the present instance, lest my silence should be construed an acknowledgment of the truth of your allegations, and a pretense be thence taken for exercising future barbarities by the American troops.

"By this motive, and upon this only, I condescend to inform you, that I would not be conscious of the acts you presume to impute to me, for the whole continent of America, though the wealth of worlds was in its bowels, and a paradise upon its surface.

"It has happened, that all my transactions with the Indian nations, last year and this, have been clearly heard, distinctly understood, accurately minuted, by very numerous, and in many parts very unprejudiced persons. So immediately opposite to the truth is your assertion that I have paid a price for scalps, that one of the first regulations established by me at the great council in May, and repeated and enforced, and invariably adhered to since, was, that the Indians should receive compensation for prisoners, because it would prevent cruelty; and that not only such compensation should be withheld, but a strict account demanded for scalps. These pledges of conquest, for such you well know they will ever esteem them, were solemnly and peremptorily prohibited to be taken from the wounded, and even the dying; and the persons of aged men, women, children, and prisoners, were pronounced sacred, even in an assault.

"In regard to Miss McCrea, her fall wanted not the tragic display you have labored to give it, to make it as sincerely abhorred and lamented by me, as it can be by the tenderest of her friends. The fact was no premeditated barbarity. On the contrary, two chiefs who had brought her off for the purpose of security, not of violence to her person, disputed which should be her guard, and in a fit of savage passion in one, from whose hands she was snatched, the unhappy woman became the victim. Upon the first intelligence of this event, I obliged the Indians to deliver the murderer

ful causes" that aroused the people, and induced them to "abhor and execrate an army which consented to act with such ferocious auxiliaries." The patriots of the north had become dejected from ill success. Defeat had attended them from the borders of Canada. The "insolent foe" had broken down the barriers that opposed him, and was overrunning their pleasant land. In the gloom that surrounded them, they beheld only the prospect of submission and despair. The massacre at Fort Edward startled them from their lethargy, and helped to inspire them with that stern determination which eventually proved irresistible. Indeed, it would seem that Providence had selected the betrothed maiden on the shore of the Hudson, as a sacrifice to the drooping spirit of Liberty.

If the story, as it floated on the popular breath to every hamlet and remote settlement in the land, awakened such intense feeling among the citizens at large, what must have been the emotions of her immediate friends, and how severe the agony of him, through whose unintentional instrumentality,

into my hands; and, though to have punished him by our laws, or principles of justice, would have been perhaps unprecedented, he certainly should have suffered an ignominious death, had I not been convinced from my circumstances and observation, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that a pardon, under the terms which I presented and they accepted, would be more efficacious than an execution, to prevent similar mischiefs.

"The above instance excepted, your intelligence respecting the cruelty of the Indians is false."

the hideous butchery had occurred! Immediately on the arrival of Le Loup's party, Mrs. McNiel recognized the scalp, and gave free utterance to the most bitter denunciations of her murderers. Solomon, who was present at the recognition, and supposed his brother had not yet been informed of the occurrence, hastened in search of him to announce the melancholy intelligence. He found him alone in his tent, his bowed head resting on his hands. He called him by name, but he answered not. "David," he repeated; and, as the voice fell upon his ear, the lieutenant slowly lifted up his head and gazed silently in his brother's face. There was that in the expression of his eyes and in his wild and haggard features, that told more forcibly than language could express, that the dreadful news had been conveyed to him, and that it had already withered up his heart. "What did he say—did he become boisterous in his grief, when the scalp of Jenny met his eyes?"—we inquired of his nephew, during his narration. "No, he did not rave," he replied. "My uncle Solomon said, he gazed at it long and steadfastly, speaking not a word, nor answering when spoken to: his mind seemed to be wandering and lost; he was not himself." At length, he somewhat recovered from the terrible shock which, it was feared for a time, would entirely dethrone his reason; but from that hour his whole nature appeared to have undergone a change. He had been noted for his love of social enjoyment;

he was the soul of every convivial gathering, and wherever he appeared, at the festival and the feast, was accustomed to "set the table in a roar."—Henceforth he shunned the presence of festivity, never more mingling in scenes of merriment, but chose rather to walk apart in gloomy and solitary anguish. From that time forward to the end of life, he who had laughed away his youth, was never seen to smile. He remained with the army until it surrendered at Saratoga. In the battle of Bemus Heights, he exhibited an utter recklessness of danger, rushing amidst the thickest perils, as if determined to throw away his life. When the cause he espoused was lost, and all the glowing hopes of youth had changed to ashes in his grasp, he bade farewell to the scenes where he had suffered so much misery, and retired with his brethren into Canada. There he selected a secluded residence, and passed the remainder of his life in solitude.—His friends were careful to avoid any allusion, in his presence, to the incidents of the Revolution. He sometimes rehearsed the doleful story of his misfortunes, voluntarily, to his nephews and other relatives; but it was of extremely rare occurrence. He never revisited his old home on the Hudson, and never married. Every year, when the twenty-seventh of July returned, the fatal day on which the fortunes of his life were wrecked, he would shut himself in his room, and refuse to be seen by any one. Thus, for twenty years, he lingered

through an unhappy existence, when his family, who had so long looked with pity on his shattered intellect and broken spirit, were called to lay him in the grave.

Previous to the Revolution, there was, perhaps, no family settled on the upper waters of the Hudson, who exerted greater influence or held more extensive possessions, than the Joneses. Their landed estates included a section of country upon which large and thriving villages have since arisen, and which, in the progress of time, have become of almost inestimable value. The fortunes of the war drove them from their inheritance. Their broad lands were confiscated; and among the later generations that have dwelt upon them, but few probably have known aught of the history of their ancient owners. After the lapse of seventy-five years, however, recent developments seem to indicate that the name of the old proprietors is about to become closely connected with the title of the soil. One of their descendants appeared before the New York Legislature of 1853, and presented a memorial to that body, wherein he claimed legal title to the forfeited estate of his ancestor. The claim rests upon the ground that the judgment of confiscation was not rendered until after the treaty of peace was signed between Great Britain and the United States. And inasmuch as, by the terms of that treaty, it was agreed there should be no future confiscations by reason of the part any person might have taken in

the war, it is insisted by the claimant that the judgment rendered subsequently, is void, and that he is sustained in that position by decisions of both the State and Federal courts. The memorial was referred to the Attorney General for his opinion, who afterwards submitted to the consideration of the Legislature a report favorable to the claim.*

Having traced the melancholy history of David Jones to the close of his joyless life, we return once more to the hill-side, to look upon the mutilated body of poor Jenny. Through the following night it remained in the same spot where Duluth had laid it. No one deemed it prudent to venture such a distance from the Fort, the afternoon succeeding the massacre. At dawn the next morning, a file of men were sent out in search of it. They found it, stark and ghastly, partially concealed beneath leaves and brush, and, near by, the corpse of Van Vechten stretched upon the earth. When they returned, her brother, with some women from his neighborhood, had arrived at the Fort. He bent over her mangled remains and wept in bitterness of spirit. He knelt down and kissed her bloody forehead, and would have clasped the decaying body in his arms, had not friends gently restrained him. They led him away from the sad spectacle, and kindly sought to soothe him with many unavailing words of consolation.

That morning the Fort was evacuated. In ad-

* See Appendix, C.

vance of the retreating Americans, a small detachment bore the bodies of the slain. The party halted three miles south of Fort Edward, on the bank of a small stream that flows into the Hudson. Here, in a rude grave, they laid Jenny down to her last sleep. Strong men wept aloud, as they turned from the humble sepulchre, and departed on their way.

Such was the excitement following these events, as has previously been observed, that General Burgoyne was induced to institute an inquiry into the matter. It was assuming too formidable an aspect to be "winked at." He assembled his Indians in council at Fort Ann, and having reminded them of his instructions at the great war-feast on the Boquet, demanded the surrender of the murderer, declaring he should suffer death. Le Loup was delivered up, and for a time it was determined that his execution should take place. He was at length pardoned, however, upon condition that the savages should abstain from further barbarities, and strictly adhere for the future to their previous promises. Le Loup's influence and prominence among the tribes was, perhaps, one cause of this unjust clemency. Besides, Burgoyne affected to believe, and possibly may have in reality supposed, that he was not authorized by the laws of England to impose the punishment of death upon the murderer; "as if" says the Italian historian of the Revolution, "there existed not other laws besides the English, which bound him to inflict a just chastisement upon the perpetrator of a crime so

execrable." But this ill-advised mercy of the British General soon after recoiled upon himself. Restrained from further gratifying their insatiable thirst for blood, large numbers deserted, returning to their country, pillaging and plundering by the way.

The royal army moved forward to Fort Edward, and took possession of that post on the 30th of July. On arriving at the Hudson, the English "were seized with a delirium of joy." It was the point to which they had long looked forward with the utmost eagerness. It had been reached at last, at the expense of many toils and incredible hardships. Now they flattered themselves with the delusion that a speedy victory could no longer escape them. They little dreamed how soon their brilliant hopes were to be succeeded by anxiety, embarrassment, and the mortification of defeat.

Here, until the fifteenth of August, they were laboriously employed in forwarding supplies from the head of Lake George to the navigable part of the Hudson. From here, also, he dispatched the expedition to Bennington, the most important incident in the history of the campaign. It was the prelude to the surrender at Saratoga. It settled the treatment of prisoners, and may be said to have secured the independence of the country. General Stark's victory over Baume at Bennington, was the first returning wave of American good fortune, that finally overwhelmed Burgoyne "and all his host."*

* Gen. John Stark, the hero of this battle, was born at London-

Meantime, the affairs of the English were becoming desperate in the country of the Mohawks. Col. St. Leger having penetrated by the way of Oswego

derry, New Hampshire, in 1728. When a young man he was taken by the St. Francis Indians, and carried to Canada. From this captivity he was released by the payment of a ransom obtained from his friends, which he afterwards repaid from the profits of hunting expeditions. When the five companies of Rangers were raised by Major Rogers, in 1755, Stark was made lieutenant of one of them. Distinguishing himself in this body, he was made captain, and increased his reputation by his prowess in every campaign. From the peace of 1763 to '75, he was engaged as a farmer; but hearing of the battle of Lexington, at once repaired to Cambridge. There receiving a commission as colonel, he hastened to raise a regiment in his native State. He was marching towards Cambridge when the battle of Bunker Hill commenced, and led his troops directly to the attack. His bravery on this occasion was worthy of his former reputation. In the campaign of 1776, he proceeded from New York to Canada. He was at Princeton, and commanded the right wing at the battle of Trenton. Being overlooked in the promotion of officers in the spring of 1777, he retired to his farm. In July, of that year, he accepted the command of the New Hampshire troops, on condition that he should not be obliged to serve under any continental officer. He marched to Bennington, where he defeated a German force under Count Baume. For this victory he received the thanks of Congress, and was appointed Brigadier-General by that body. Recruiting a new force, he reached Saratoga in season to assist in the capture of Burgoyne. General Stark continued in the army till the close of the Revolution, when he retired again to his farm. He enjoyed a green old age, living until he was ninety-three years old. He died in 1822, and over his ashes a monument has been erected by his family. He was a man of robust constitution and great firmness of character. He was brave, honest, and direct. To the last years of his life he conversed upon the events of the past with energy and patriotism, detailing his border fights with graphic minuteness."—*Knapp.*

and the Oneida Lake to Fort Schuyler (now Rome), encamped under its walls on the 3d of August. It has been seen that, on separating in Canada, it was the understanding between St. Leger and Burgoyne, that they should descend the Mohawk and Hudson simultaneously at the head of their respective forces, and unite in the vicinity of Albany. This plan of operations was disclosed to the Americans by Thomas Spencer, a Sachem of the Oneidas, which he managed to obtain from Daniel Claus, a son-in-law of Sir William Johnson. Thus, aware of the general designs of the enemy, the Americans had time to fortify Fort Schuyler, or, as it is as often designated, Fort Stanwix, with more skill and defend it with greater success than St. Leger had expected. On the arrival of the latter, it was occupied by the regiments of Colonels Gansevoort and Willett, who were joined the same day by two hundred men under Lieutenant Colonel Mellon. At the same time General Herkimer had assembled the militia of Tryon County, and was marching to the relief of the garrison. Having reached the mouth of Oriskany Creek, he sent a courier to inform Col. Gansevoort of his advance. Before the arrival of the courier, however, St. Leger had received intelligence of Herkimer's approach, and detached a body of Indians and Rangers under Butler and Brant, and a division of Johnson's Greens, under Major Watts, to intercept him. They concealed themselves in ambush in a deep ravine, into which the Provincials, unsuspicious

of the enemy, unhesitatingly entered, followed by their baggage wagons. At a signal from Brant the war-whoop sounded, and the Americans found themselves unexpectedly surrounded by a host of savages, who seemed to have suddenly arisen from the bowels of the earth. A battle of six hours ensued, which has been pronounced "the bloodiest encounter in proportion to the numbers engaged, that occurred during the war." In one of the pauses of the storm, a firing was heard in the direction of the Fort. The Americans at once comprehended its import, and with increased energy renewed the strife. It assured them that the courier had arrived, and that the sortie which Herkimer had recommended was being made. Such, indeed, was the fact. As soon as arrangements could be made, after the arrival of the messenger, Col. Marinus Willett at the head of a detachment, sallied out and fell upon the camp occupied by Sir John Johnson and his Royal Greens. The attack was so sudden that Sir John was unable to bring his troops into order, which fled in dismay beyond the river. The Indians, also, seized with panic, buried themselves in the surrounding forests. Meantime, the battle of Oriskany was raging furiously. At length the savages, finding their ranks thinning rapidly, raised the cry of retreat, and were pursued by Herkimer's forces with shouts of victory. Notwithstanding this result, Fort Schuyler was so closely besieged, that Col. Gansevoort was unable to obtain correct intelligence in regard to the termi-

nation of the conflict. St. Leger compelled Col. Billinger and Major Frey, who had been taken prisoners, to direct a letter to him, filled with deliberate misrepresentations, and the next morning demanded the immediate surrender of the fortress, gravely assuring Gansevoort that the Americans had been cut to pieces at Oriskany, and that Burgoyne was in possession of Albany. The undismayed commander promptly refused, expressing his determined resolution to defend the post to the last extremity. The siege was vigorously prosecuted; the ammunition and provisions in the Fort were rapidly diminishing; and there were not wanting those who openly hinted that surrender was inevitable. Under such circumstances, the astonishment of the garrison can easily be imagined, when on the morning of the 22d of August, they beheld the enemy breaking up their camp, and flying with such precipitation from the Fort, that their tents, artillery, and camp equipage were left behind!

The cause of this most mysterious movement was soon explained. Arnold, who was at the mouth of the Mohawk, had been dispatched by Schuyler to the relief of Gansevoort. Aware that his limited force was too in considerable to hazard an engagement, he conceived a stratagem, while resting at Fort Dayton, which was attended with remarkable success. Among the tory prisoners then at that post was one Hew Yost Schuyler, who had been taken as a spy, and condemned to death. His mother and brother, who lived at Little Falls, has-

tened to Fort Dayton, and pleaded with Arnold for his life. It was granted on condition that he would make his way into St. Leger's camp and alarm the Indians by the announcement, that an overwhelming army was advancing upon them. The condition was accepted, and his brother retained as a hostage to secure his fidelity. The crafty tory departed for Fort Schuyler, and on his way fell in with an Oneida who readily joined in the enterprise. Hew Yost, having punctured his coat in several places, entered St. Leger's camp in breathless agitation, proclaiming that a vast army was at hand, led by the formidable Arnold, and pointing to his riddled garment, declared he had only escaped destruction by an absolute miracle. The Indians flocked around him and looked in each others' faces with surprise and alarm, as the terrible name of Arnold was announced. Presently, and according to agreement, the Oneida appeared among them, more than corroborating the statements they had heard. He added that Burgoyne and all his forces had been taken prisoners,—an assertion the more easily credited, from the fact that vague rumors of the defeat at Bennington had been already received. He represented the approaching hosts, as exceeding in number all the tribes of the red man that had ever dwelt in the country of the Mohawks—in his own language, "more numerous than the leaves on the trees." The savages, seized with uncontrollable alarm, resolved to flee. Neither threats nor promises could induce them to remain. The panic became general through-

out the camp, and soon the whole beleaguering army were in disordered retreat. Its scattered remnants, hungry and half naked, collected at Oswego, and from thence accompanied St. Leger back to Canada.

The shock produced by the defeat at Bennington, was soon followed by intelligence of the failure of St. Leger. Burgoyne began to find his position critical in the extreme. While these disasters were causing lukewarm loyalists to withdraw from him, hundreds of patriots were flocking to the American camp. A large body of militia under General Lincoln, having penetrated the country by the way of Manchester and Pawlet, were lying in rear of him. Gates, who had unjustly succeeded Schuyler, was stationed with the main army at Van Schaik's Island, from whence he proceeded up the river to Bemus Heights. Notwithstanding the difficulties that multiplied around him, Burgoyne remained steady to his purpose. The disasters that had befallen him produced no disposition to abandon the enterprise. Accordingly, he marched down the east bank of the Hudson to the Battenkill, from which point he crossed the river on the 13th and 14th of September, and encamped on the plain of Saratoga, determined to decide the fate of the expedition in a general engagement. By the morning of the 18th, he had moved down within two miles of the American camp, and here he halted and made ready for battle.

The morning of the 19th of September, 1777, at

length dawned—a clear, cool morning, precursor of the day destined to decide the fortunes of America. At ten o'clock the British army was in motion, Burgoyne in the center, flanked on the left by Phillips and Reidesel, on the right by Fraser and Breyman. About noon, Col. Morgan and Major Dearborn marched out and attacked the Canadians and Indians on the hills. At the same time, a brisk skirmish ensued between the American pickets and a party of loyalists and savages, on the low land bordering the river. Meanwhile Arnold and Fraser met on the plain above, disputing the ground inch by inch, and displaying on both sides deeds of desperate valor. At three o'clock, there was a brief cessation of hostilities. Each army paused for breath, snatching a moment to gather up their exhausted energies. They were so near as to hear the orders as they passed along the respective lines. Again the contest was renewed. And now, like the ebbing and flowing of the tide, the long line of battle waved to and fro, until darkness fell upon the scene, when the weary patriots retired within their lines, while the British laid down upon their arms. It was substantially an American victory; and justice demands of the impartial historian to record the fact, that it was owing principally to the chivalrous exertions of Benedict Arnold, who, notwithstanding his subsequent recreancy, which no plea of injustice or neglect can palliate, was as brave a man as ever battled in the ranks of freedom.

Having slept upon the field, the enemy, on the morning of the 20th, surprised at the bold resistance of the patriots, and seeing the futility of attempting to carry their works by storm, resolved to strengthen his position, and wait the co-operation of Sir Henry Clinton. From this time to the 7th of October, the contending parties lay within reach of each others' cannon. Meanwhile, the Americans were constantly increasing in strength, while the British were every day diminishing. The Indians, disappointed in their hopes of plunder, and remembering it was the hunting season, became suddenly solicitous for the welfare of those whom they had left in their wigwams, and deserted in droves.

At length the enemy, despairing of aid from Clinton, reduced to short allowance, and entangled in a web of perils, were driven to the necessity of ignominiously retreating, or hazarding the chances of another struggle. The latter alternative was adopted. On the 7th of October, therefore, a body of Canadians and loyalists attacked the American pickets, and, being joined by a reinforcement, were driving the patriots before them, until checked by Morgan's riflemen after a hot contest of half an hour. Burgoyne, in the mean time, had drawn up his army in the following order: The light infantry under Earl Balcarras, were placed on the extreme right; the artillery and grenadiers commanded by Majors Williams and Ackland, on the left; the Hessians with a division of British troops, occupied the center un-

der Phillips and Reidesel; while General Fraser, with a body of picked men, was stationed in advance of the western extremity of the right wing, with instructions to fall upon the enemy's flank and rear, as soon as the attack should commence in front. The intentions of the British were perceived, and to counteract their movements it was arranged, that the brigades of Generals Poor and Learned, should attack the artillery and grenadiers composing Burgoyne's left wing, while Morgan's riflemen who were directed to march, under cover of the woods and by a circuitous route, to a position in flank of Fraser's division, should at the same time fall upon the latter force. At half past two o'clock in the afternoon, General Poor drew up his men, and, ordering them to reserve their fire until they had commenced ascending the eminence on which the artillery and grenadiers were posted, advanced steadily and silently to the attack. The men obeyed the order, moving firmly forward, while showers of grape shot and musket balls swept, fortunately, over their heads, making havoc among the branches of the trees. At length, the signal of attack was given. It was answered with a shout; and such was the fierce vigor displayed by the Americans, that in thirty minutes the grenadiers retreated, leaving their commander badly wounded and the ground strewn with their dead and dying.

Morgan's riflemen had reached the desired position on the western heights. At the first sound of

battle, he descended like an avalanche on the advanced body under Fraser, and having driven it before him, wheeled rapidly to the left, attacking the British right wing with such unexpected and resistless energy, that it was thrown into sudden and complete confusion. At this moment, Dearborn with fresh troops attacked the enemy in front. The whole right wing gave way, and were flying from the field; but Earl Balcarras succeeded in rallying them, and bringing them once more into action.

In consequence of previous difficulties, originating, as many suppose, in personal jealousy, Arnold had been deprived of his command. On this day, he was even denied the privilege of taking any part whatever in the action. Nevertheless, he watched with intense interest every movement of the opposing armies. His soul longed to mingle in the battle. At length, when he saw the enemy returning, after their temporary flight, his restless spirit would no longer brook control. Mounting his horse, he galloped to the field, and placing himself at the head of a part of his old division, was greeted with enthusiastic acclamation. Major Armstrong was sent by Gates to order him back, but the enraged general soon placed himself where it was dangerous to follow. At the head of his men, he dashed furiously upon the Hessians, wildly brandishing his sword above his head, and seeking danger wherever it was most imminent. The action now became general. Fraser was the master spirit

on the side of the British. He brought order out of confusion, and inspired his wavering troops with courage. Mounted on a splendid gray, and clad in full uniform, he was everywhere conspicuous. Morgan saw that the fate of the battle depended upon him. Calling a file of men, he pointed towards the doomed general, remarking, "I admire and honor him, but it is necessary he should die." Within five minutes he fell from his war horse, and was carried, mortally wounded, into camp.

Burgoyne now took command in person; but the panic which spread along the line when Fraser fell, was increased by the arrival of Tenbroeck with a large body of New-York troops; and he could no longer keep up the sinking courage of his men. They fled precipitately, followed in their tumultuous retreat, by the Americans, up to their very entrenchments. Arnold, meanwhile, was the controlling spirit on the field. From out the smoke and flame, his loud voice was heard animating the soldiers; and wherever danger was most terrible, he was in the midst of it. At the head of a brave band, he rushed into the camp of Earl Balcarras—beat down the bayonets that opposed him, and spurred on, through a shower of leaden hail, to where the Germans were entrenched. This gallant feat closed the contest. The Hessians, terrified at his approach, delivered a volley—that killed his horse and severely wounded him in the leg—and retreated in dismay. At dusk, when the battle was

won, Major Armstrong succeeded in finding Arnold at the sally-port, lying wounded and disabled, by the side of his dead horse, and presented him Gates' order to return to camp, lest he "might do some rash thing!"

During the night the British abandoned their camp, which the Americans took possession of in the morning. General Fraser, whose wound had proved mortal, was buried at six o'clock in the evening of the 8th, on the top of a high mountain, in obedience to his dying wish.* The burial was witnessed by hundreds, of both armies. The Americans, ignorant of what was taking place, at first kept up a cannonade on the redoubt. As soon, however, as it was ascertained that the solemn procession that had wound up the mountain, were consigning the body of Fraser to the grave, minute guns were fired in homage to his memory. It was a sad spectacle; and Burgoyne thus describes it:— "The incessant cannonading during the solemnity; the steady attitude and unaltered voice with which the chaplain officiated, though frequently covered with dust, which the shot threw up on all sides of him; the mute but expressive mixture of sensibility

* "I heard him often exclaim, '*O fatal ambition! Poor General Burgoyne! Oh! my poor wife!*' He was asked if he had any request to make, to which he replied that, if General Burgoyne would permit it, *he should like to be buried at six o'clock in the evening, on the top of a mountain, in a redoubt which had been built there.* About eight o'clock in the morning *he died.*"—*Letters of Baroness Reidesel.*

and indignation upon every countenance,—these objects will remain to the last of life upon the mind of every man who was present. The growing duskiness added to the scenery, and the whole would make one of the finest subjects for the pencil of a master that the field ever exhibited."

As soon as the burial of Fraser was over, under cover of night, and in the midst of a cold, severe storm, Burgoyne commenced his retreat, and arrived at Saratoga (now Schuylerville) on the evening of the 9th. It had been his intention to cross the river at this place; but Gates had anticipated him, and stationed a strong force on the opposite shore. He then resolved to proceed as far as Fort Edward, and at that point force his way over the Hudson and obtain possession of the fortress. The advanced party sent forward, however, found the Fort in possession of the Americans, and was compelled to return to camp. The unlucky general now found himself entirely surrounded. The main body of the Americans lay south of him; Morgan and his corps in rear; Fellows, with three thousand men occupied the farther shore directly in his front, while numerous small detachments of militia and volunteers were watching him from every point. A more disheartening and utterly hopeless situation can scarcely be conceived. They were exposed to a constant fire; the Canadians and loyalists were deserting; there was not a place of refuge for the sick, or for the ladies and children of the officers. Not

a word came from Clinton; none but women dared venture to the river for water; there were not four days' provisions on hand, and not the slightest prospect of obtaining more. Exhausted with fatigue and suffering, gnawed by hunger, distressed with thirst, threatened with speedy and inevitable destruction—the last flickering ray of hope was at length extinguished. The proud spirit of the haughty Briton was forced to bend. On the 13th, in a general council of officers, it was resolved to communicate to Gen. Gates a proposition to surrender; on the 17th the conquered army left their quarters on the heights, and, marching down dejectedly to the water side, grounded their arms. The same evening the English and Hessians departed on their journey across the country to Massachusetts Bay, as provided for in the fourth article of the capitulation, while the remaining Indians, the relics of Burgoyne's aboriginal force, were placed under a strong guard for protection and safe-keeping. Without this precautionary measure they would have been sacrificed by the exasperated militia; because, says the historian of the campaign, "the murder of Jane McCrea had hardened every heart against them, and prevented the plea of mercy from being interposed in their behalf." * Thus terminated an expedition which cost Great Britain immense treasure, and which, at setting out, it was confidently pre-

* Neilson, 223.

dicted by the enemies of liberty, would "crush every part of America."

For half a century the bones of Jenny remained undisturbed in the humble grave on the shore of the Hudson. At the end of that period they were exhumed, and, followed by a long procession, borne in solemn pomp to the burial ground of Fort Edward village. Near the ruins of the old fortress, in the presence of young men and maidens, and a vast multitude of people that the unusual ceremony had attracted thither, they were deposited by the side of those of her old friend, Mrs. McNiel. One of the most eloquent orators* of his time, pronounced a funeral discourse; and "all Fort Edward wept," as he recounted, with melting pathos, the melancholy story of her life. But her remains were not destined to rest there forever. In 1852, they were conveyed to the beautiful cemetery, just over the brow of the hill at whose base the clear water of the spring still gurgles up between the decaying roots of the Old Pine. There, close by the spot where her young life was so rudely taken, and where a second generation of pines cast their shadows on the graves of a succeeding generation of men, they now repose. Over "the poor handful of earth," affection has raised a graceful monument, whereon is inscribed her name and age, the time and manner of her death, and underneath is written:

"To commemorate one of the most thrilling

* Rev. Hooper Cummings, of Albany.

events of the American Revolution, to do justice to the memory of the gallant British officer to whom she was affianced, and as a simple tribute to the memory of the departed, this stone is erected by her niece."

APPENDIX.

A.

The following account of the battle of Bennington, is taken from the narrative of an officer who accompanied Baume on the expedition. After describing minutely all the incidents of the march, up to the morning of the engagement, he proceeds:—

"The morning of the 16th rose beautifully serene. The storm of the preceding day having expended itself, not a cloud was left to darken the face of the heavens; whilst the very leaves hung motionless, and the long grass waved not, under the influence of a perfect calm. Every object around, too, appeared to peculiar advantage; for the fields looked green and refreshed, the river was swollen and tumultuous, and the branches were all loaded with dew-drops, which glittered in the sun's early rays like so many diamonds. Nor would it be easy to imagine any scene more rife with peaceful and even pastoral beauty. Looking down from the summit of the rising ground, I beheld immediately beneath me a wide sweep of stately forest, interrupted at remote intervals by green meadows or yellow cornfields; whilst here and there, a cottage, a shed, or some other primitive edifice, reared its modest head, as if for the purpose of reminding the spectator, that man had begun his inroads upon nature, without as yet taking away from her simplicity and grandeur. I hardly recollect a scene which struck me at the moment more forcibly, or which has left a deeper or more lasting impression on my memory.

"I have said that the morning of the 16th rose beautifully

serene; and it is not to the operations of the elements alone that my expression applies. All was perfectly quiet at the outposts, not an enemy having been seen, nor an alarming sound heard, for several hours previous to sunrise. So peaceable, indeed, was the aspect which matters bore, that our leaders felt warmly disposed to resume the offensive, without waiting the arrival of the additional corps for which they had applied; and orders were already issued for the men to eat their breakfasts, preparatory to more active operations. But the arms were scarcely piled, and the haversacks unslung, when symptoms of a state of affairs different from that which had been anticipated, began to show themselves, and our people were recalled to their ranks in all haste, almost as soon as they had quitted them. From more than one quarter, scouts came in to report that columns of armed men were approaching; though whether with a friendly or hostile intention, neither their appearance nor actions enabled our informants to ascertain.

It has been stated, that during the last day's march our little corps was joined by many of the country people; most of whom demanded and obtained arms, as persons friendly to the royal cause. How Colonel Baume became so completely duped as to place reliance on these men, I know not; but, having listened with complacency to their previous assurances, that in Bennington a large majority of the populace were our friends, he was somehow or other persuaded to believe, that the armed bands of whose approach he was warned, were loyalists on their way to make a tender of their services to the leader of the king's troops. Filled with this idea, he dispatched positive orders to the outposts, that no molestations should be offered to the advancing columns; but that the pickets, retiring before them, should join the main body, where every disposition was made to receive either friend or foe. Unfortunately for us, these orders were but too faithfully obeyed. About half-past nine o'clock, I, who was not in the secret, beheld, to my utter amazement, our advanced parties withdraw without firing a shot, from thickets which might have been maintained for hours against any superiority of numbers; and the same thickets quickly occupied by men, whose whole demeanor, as well as their

dress and style of equipment, plainly and incontestably pointed them out as Americans.

I cannot pretend to describe the state of excitation and alarm into which our little band was now thrown. With the solitary exception of our leader, there was not a man amongst us who appeared otherwise than satisfied that those to whom he had listened were traitors; and that unless some prompt and vigorous measures were adopted, their treachery would be crowned with its full reward. Captain Fraser, in particular, seemed strongly imbued with the conviction that we were willfully deceived. He pointed out, in plain language, the extreme improbability of the story which these deserters had told, and warmly urged our chief to withdraw his confidence from them; but all his arguments proved fruitless. Colonel Baume remained convinced of their fidelity. He saw no reason to doubt that the people whose approach excited so much apprehension, were the same of whose arrival he had been forewarned; and he was prevented from placing himself entirely in their power, only by the positive refusal of his followers to obey orders given to that effect, and the rash impetuosity of the enemy.

We might have stood about half an hour under arms, watching the proceedings of a column of four or five hundred men, who, after dislodging the pickets, had halted just at the edge of the open country, when a sudden trampling of feet in the forest on our right, followed by the report of several muskets, attracted our attention. A patrol was instantly sent in the direction of the sound; but before the party composing it had proceeded many yards from the lines, a loud shout, followed by a rapid though straggling fire of musketry, warned us to prepare for a meeting the reverse of friendly. Instantly the Indians came pouring in, carrying dismay and confusion in their countenance and gestures. We were surrounded on all sides; columns were advancing everywhere against us, and those whom we had hitherto treated as friends, had only waited till the arrival of their support might justify them in advancing. There was no falsehood in these reports, though made by men who spoke rather from their fears than their knowledge. The column in our front no sooner heard the shout, than they replied cordially and loudly to it; then, firing a volley with deliber-

ate and murderous aim, rushed furiously towards us. Now then, at length, our leader's dreams of security were dispelled. He found himself attacked in front and flank by thrice his numbers, who pressed forward with the confidence which our late proceedings were calculated to produce; whilst the very persons in whom he had trusted, and to whom he had given arms, lost no time in turning them against him. These fellows no sooner heard their comrades cry, than they deliberately discharged their muskets amongst Reidesel's dragoons; and dispersing before any steps could be taken to seize them, escaped, with the exception of one or two, to their friends.

If Colonel Baume had permitted himself to be duped into a great error, it is no more than justice to confess, that he exerted himself manfully to remedy the evil, and avert its consequences.—Our little band, which had hitherto remained in column, was instantly ordered to extend; and the troops lining the breastwork, replied to the fire of the Americans with extreme celerity and considerable effect. So close and destructive, indeed, was our first volley, that the assailants recoiled before it, and would have retreated, in all probability, within the wood; but ere we could take advantage of the confusion produced, fresh attacks developed themselves, and we were warmly engaged on every side, and from all quarters. It became evident that each of our detached posts was about to be assailed at the same instant. Not one of our dispositions had been concealed from the enemy, who, on the contrary, seemed to be aware of the exact number of men stationed at each point; and they were one and all threatened by a force perfectly adequate to bear down opposition, and yet by no means disproportionably large, or such as to render the main body inefficient. All, moreover, was done with the sagacity and coolness of veterans, who perfectly understood the nature of the resistance to be expected, and the difficulties to be overcome; and who, having well considered and matured their plans, were resolved to carry them into execution at all hazards, and at every expense of life.

It was at this moment, when the heads of columns began to show themselves in rear of our right and left, that the Indians, who had hitherto acted with spirit, and something like order, lost

all confidence and fled. Alarmed at the prospect of having their retreat cut off, they stole away, after their own fashion, in single files, in spite of the strenuous remonstrances of Baume, and of their own officers, leaving us more than ever exposed, by the abandonment of that angle of the intrenchments which they had been appointed to maintain. But even this spectacle, distressing as it doubtless was, failed in affecting our people with a feeling at all akin to despair. The vacancy which the retreat of the savages occasioned, was promptly filled up by one of our two field-pieces, whilst the other poured destruction upon the enemy in front, as often as they showed themselves in the open country, or threatened to advance.

In this state things continued upwards of three quarters of an hour. Though repeatedly assailed in front, flanks, and rear, we maintained ourselves with so much obstinacy, as to inspire a hope that the enemy might even yet be kept at bay till the arrival of Breyman's corps, now momentarily expected; when an accident occurred, which at once put an end to this expectation, and exposed us, almost defenseless, to our fate. The solitary tumbril which contained the whole of our spare ammunition, became ignited, and blew up with a violence which shook the very ground under our feet, and caused a momentary cessation in firing, both on our side and that of the enemy. But the cessation was only for a moment. The American officers, guessing the extent of our calamity, cheered their men on to fresh exertions. They rushed up the ascent with redoubled ardor, in spite of the heavy volley which we poured in to check them; and finding our guns silent, they sprang over the parapet, and dashed within our works. For a few seconds the scene which ensued defies all power of language to describe. The bayonet, the butt of the rifle, the saber, the pike, were in full play; and men fell, as they rarely fall in modern war, under the direct blows of their enemies. But such a struggle could not, in the nature of things, be of long continuance. Outnumbered, broken, and somewhat disheartened by late events, our people wavered, and fell back, or fought singly and unconnectedly, till they were either cut down at their posts, obstinately defending themselves, or compelled to surrender. Of Reidesel's dismounted dra-

goons, few survived to tell how nobly they had behaved; Colonel Baume, shot through the body by a rifle ball, fell mortally wounded; and all order and discipline being lost, flight or submission was alone thought of. For my own part, whether the feeling arose from desperation or accident I cannot tell, but I resolved not to be taken. As yet I had escaped almost unhurt, a slight flesh wound in the left arm having alone fallen to my share; and gathering around me about thirty of my comrades, we made a rush where the enemy's ranks appeared weakest, and burst through. This done, each man made haste to shift for himself, without pausing to consider the fate of his neighbor; and losing one-third of our number from the enemy's fire, the remainder took refuge, in groups of two or three, within the forest.—*Glick.*

B.

Among the many ballads that have been written on the subject of Jane McCrea's murder, is the following by Henry William Herbert.

JANE McCREA.

It was brilliant autumn time—
The most brilliant time of all,
When the gorgeous woods are gleaming,
Ere the leaves begin to fall;
When the maple bows are crimson,
And the hickory shines like gold,
And the noons are sultry hot,
And the nights are frosty cold.

When the country has no green,
Save the sword-grass by the rill,
And the willows in the valley,
And the pine upon the hill;
When the pippin leaves the bough,
And the sumach's fruit is red,
And the quail is piping loud
From the buckwheat where he fed.

When the sky is blue as steel,
And the river clear as glass;
When the mist is on the mountain,
And the net-work on the grass;
When the harvests all are housed,
And the farmer's work is done,
And the stubbles are deserted
For the fox-hound and the gun.

It was brilliant autumn time—
When the army of the North,
With its cannon and dragoons,
And its riflemen, came forth;
Through the country all abroad
There was spread a mighty fear
Of the Indians in the van,
And the Hessians in the rear.

There was spread a mighty terror,
And the bravest souls were faint;
For the shaven chiefs were mustered,
In their scalp-locks and their paint;
And the forest was alive—
And the tramp of warrior men
Scared the eagle from his eyry,
And the gray wolf from his den.

For the bold Burgoyne was marching—
With his thousands marching down,
To do battle with the people—
To do battle for the crown.
But Starke he lay at Bennington,
By the Hoosick's waters bright,
And Arnold and his forces
Gathered thick on Behmus' height.

Fort Edward on the Hudson,
  It was guarded night and day,
By Van Vechten and his woodmen—
  Right sturdy woodmen they!
Fort Edward on the Hudson,
  It was guarded day and night,
Oh! but in the early morning
  It saw a bitter sight!

A bitter sight, and fearful,
  And a shameful deed of blood!
All the plain was cleared around,
  But the slopes were thick with wood;
And a mighty pine stood there,
  On the summit of the hill,
And a bright spring rose beneath it,
  With a low and liquid trill;

And a little way below,
  All with vine-boughs overrun,
A white walled cot was sleeping—
  There that shameful deed was done!
Oh! it was the blythest morning
  In the brilliant autumn time;
The sun shone never brighter,
  When the year was in its prime.

But a maiden fair was weeping
  In that cottage day by day,
Wo she was, and worn with watching
  For her truelove far away.
He was bearing noble arms,
  Noble arms for England's king!
She was waiting, sad and tearful,
  Near the pine tree, near the spring!

Weary waiting for his coming—
Yet she feared not; for she knew
That her lover's name would guard her,
That her lover's heart was true.
True he was; nor did forget,
As he marched the wildwoods through,
Her to whom his troth was plighted
By the Hudson's waters blue.

He bethought him of the madness
And the fury of the strife;
He bethought him of the peril
To that dear and precious life.
So he called an Indian chief,
In his paint and war-array—
Oh! it was a cursed thought,
And it was a luckless day.

"Go!" he said, "and seek my lady,
By Fort Edward, where she lies;
Have her hither to the camp!
She shall prove a worthy prize!"
And he charged him with a letter,
With a letter to his dear,
Bidding her to follow freely,
And that she should nothing fear.

Lightly, brightly, rose the sun;
High his heart, and full of mirth;
Gray and gloomy closed the night;
Steamy mists bedewed the earth.
Thence he never ceased to sorrow,
Till his tedious life was o'er—
For that night he thought to see her;
But he never saw her more.

By the pine tree on the hill,
  Armed men were at their post,
While the early sun was low,
  Watching for the royal host.
Came a rifle's sudden crack!
  Rose a wild and fearful yell!
Rushed the Indians from the brake!
  Fled the guard, or fought and fell!

Fought and fell! and fiercely o'er them
  Rose the hideous death-halloo!
One alone was spared of all—
  Wounded he, and pinioned too!
He it was the deed that saw,
  As he lay the spring beside—
Had his manly arm been free,
  He had saved her, or had died!

Up the hill he saw them lead her,
  And she followed free from fear—
And her beauty blazed the brighter,
  As she deemed her lover near—
He could read the joyous hope
  Sparkling in her sunny eyes—
Lo! the sudden strife! the rage!
  They are battling for the prize!

Guns are brandished—knives are drawn!
  Flashed the death-shot, flew the ball!
By the chief, who should have saved her,
  Did the lovely victim fall.
Fell, and breathed her lover's name,
  Blessed him with her latest sigh,
Happier than he surviving,
  Happier was she to die.

Then the frantic savage seized her
  By the long and flowing hair,
Bared the keen and deadly knife,
  Whirled aloft the tresses fair—
Yelled in triumph, and retreated,
  Bearing off that trophy dread—
Think of him who sent them forth!
  Who received it—reeking red!

He received it, cold as stone,
  With a ghastly stupid stare,
Shook not, sighed not, questioned not—
  Oh! he knew that yellow hair!
And he never smiled again,
  Nor was ever seen to weep;
And he never spoke to name her,
  Save when muttering in his sleep!

Yet he did his duty well,
  With a chill and cheerless heart;
But he never seemed to know it,
  Though he played a soldier's part.
Years he lived—for grief kills not—
  But his very life was dead;
Scarcely died he any more
  When the clay was o'er his head!

Would ye farther learn of her?
  Visit then the fatal spot!
There no monument they raised,
  Storied stones they sculptured not;
But the mighty pine is there—
  Go, and ye may see it still,
Gray and ghostly, but erect,
  On the summit of the hill;

And the little fount wells out,
  Cold and clear, beneath its shade,
Cold and clear, as when beside it
  Fell that young and lovely maid.
These shall witness for the tale,
  How, on that accursed day,
Beauty, innocence, and youth
  Died in hapless JANE MCREA!

C.

REPORT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IN REFERENCE TO THE CLAIM OF DAVID JONES.

To the Hon. the Assembly of the State of New York, &c. &c. &c.:

THE Attorney General of the State, to whom was referred, by a resolution of the said Assembly, the memorial of David Jones, with instructions to examine the claim therein set forth, and report the same with his opinion to the Legislature, the said resolution being accompanied by the report of the judiciary committee of the Assembly upon the subject, having examined the proofs, chiefly documentary, in relation to the case, and given them due attention, submits for the consideration of the Legislature, in compliance with the said resolution, the following report, in reference to facts connected with the case, embracing his opinion thereupon:

It appears that, in the month of April, 1780, an indictment was preferred against Daniel Jones, the late father of the memorialist, for adhering to the enemies of this State, upon which a judgment was rendered against him by the Supreme Court of the State, on the 14th day of July, 1783, as is manifest by the record thereof remaining in the said court; by which judgment it was considered that the said Daniel Jones forfeited all his estate, both real and personal, to the people of this State.

It also appears that subsequently thereto, in the year 1788, the commissioners of forfeitures proceeded to the sale of 2,176 acres of land, in the townships of Kingsbury and Queensbury, in this State

as belonging to the said Daniel Jones, which also is made manifest by the record of the proceedings of the said commissioners, in relation to the sale of land forfeited by the said Daniel Jones.

By the treaty of peace of 1783, between Great Britain and the United States, which was signed in November, 1782, and, according to the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, came into operation on the 20th January, 1783, it was agreed that there should be no future confiscations for or by reason of the part which any person might have taken in the war; and that no person should, on that account, suffer any future loss or damage either in his person, liberty, or property, or meet with any lawful impediment in the prosecution of his just claims; and, it having been decided by the Supreme Court of this State, as well as by that of the United States, that a judgment entered after that date in similar cases, is void, as being against the treaty,—it follows that the judgment rendered against Daniel Jones, in the case alluded to and now under consideration, must also have been void, the act of rendition having been consummated several months after the treaty took effect.

The Supreme Court of the United States having also, in several instances, decided that State acts impairing the effect of that treaty were inoperative and void; and that the treaty had the effect of protecting the titles of British subjects to lands, as they then existed; and that the 9th Article of the treaty of 1794 completely confirmed them, rendering them indefeasible; the title of Daniel Jones to the land in question was, therefore, not affected by the proceedings alluded to, but continued to be held by him during his natural life, and was secured to his heir and devisee, by virtue of the latter treaty, the 9th article of which being, by the 28th article thereof, made permanent. The said 9th article of this treaty contains the following stipulation: "It is agreed that British subjects who now hold lands in the territories of the United States, and American citizens who now hold lands in the dominions of his Majesty, shall continue to hold them, according to the nature and tenure of their respective estates and titles therein; and may grant, sell, or devise the same to whom they please, in like manner as if they were natives; and that neither they nor their heirs or as-

signs shall, so far as may respect the said lands, and the legal remedies incident thereto, be regarded as aliens. By the 28th article of the same treaty, "it is agreed that the first ten articles of this treaty shall be permanent."

It is proper, here, to remark that if any legislative act could restrict the operation of the 9th article of the treaty of 1794, as to time, it could, upon the same undefined principle, alter the nature and tenure of the titles thereby secured and made permanent; and also, render alienage available as a defense, and thus render the treaty inoperative and void.

It may not be inappropriate to the occasion to observe that it has been decided by the Supreme Court of the United States, that the act of this State limiting the period for bringing claims and prosecutions against forfeited estates, passed in 1797, does not apply to the case of the heir of one whose property had been forfeited and sold, to recover the land which belonged to his ancestor, but to others whose property might have been sold as belonging to the party whose estate had been forfeited; but even if it did apply in the case of a valid attainder, it could not operate against a treaty, in support of an invalid one. It has also been judicially decided that a claim for compensation, by the tenant, for improvements upon land the title to which was protected by the treaty of 1783, is inadmissible.

The supremacy of a treaty being admitted, and also recognized by the Constitution of the General and State governments respectively, and it being laid down as a principle acknowledged and confirmed by judicial decisions, that whenever a right grows out of or is protected by a treaty, it is sanctioned, and prevails against all the laws and judicial decisions of the States, and that whoever may have this right is protected,—the case of the memorialist is divested of all difficulty, and his right, being secured and confirmed by a principle paramount in its tendency, must be respected.

The claim in question, founded as it is upon a right protected and secured by the paramount authority of two treaties, forms a tower of strength based upon the faith of a great nation, against which even the waves of legislation may beat in vain; for it must be defended on the ground of national honor.